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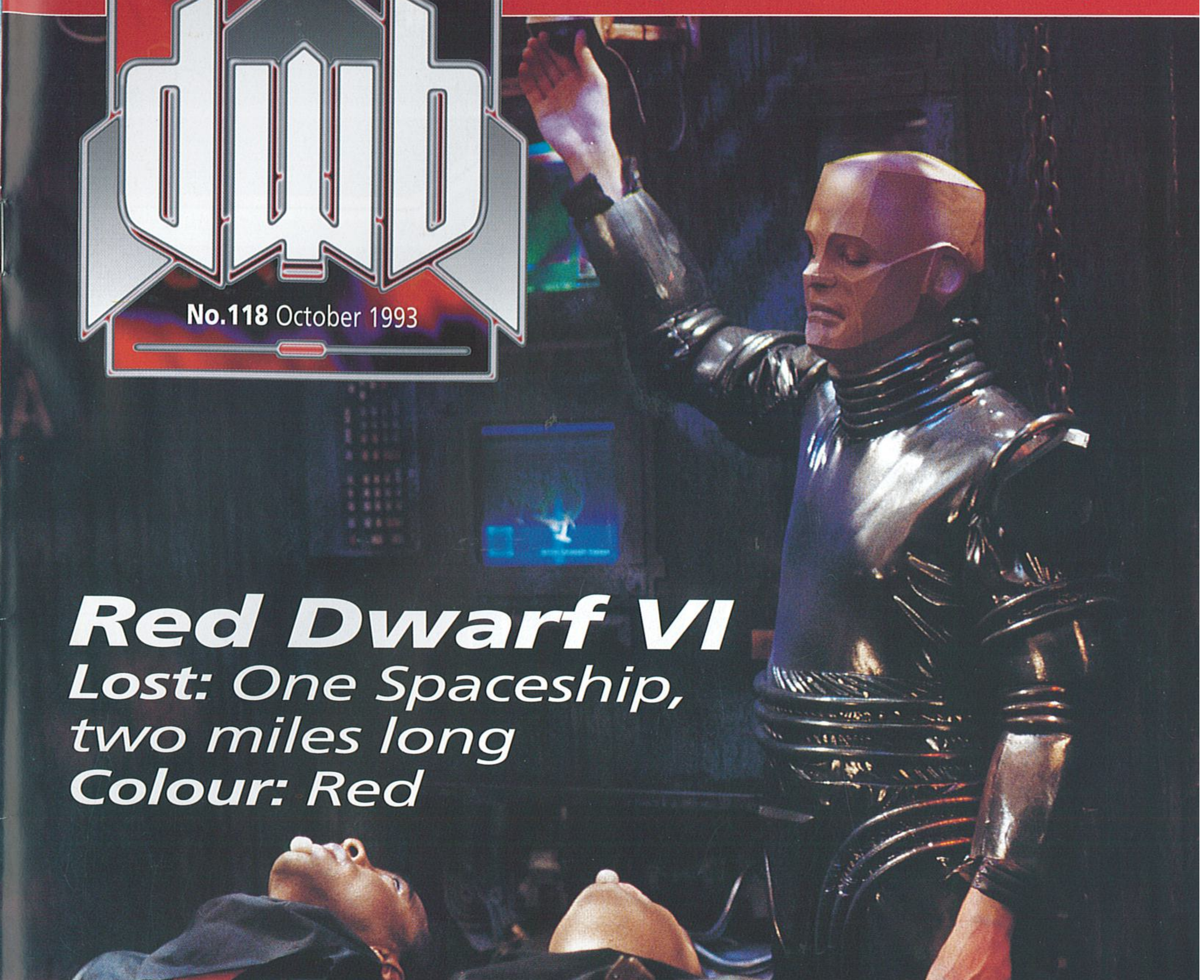
Panopticon '93 First Report

dwb

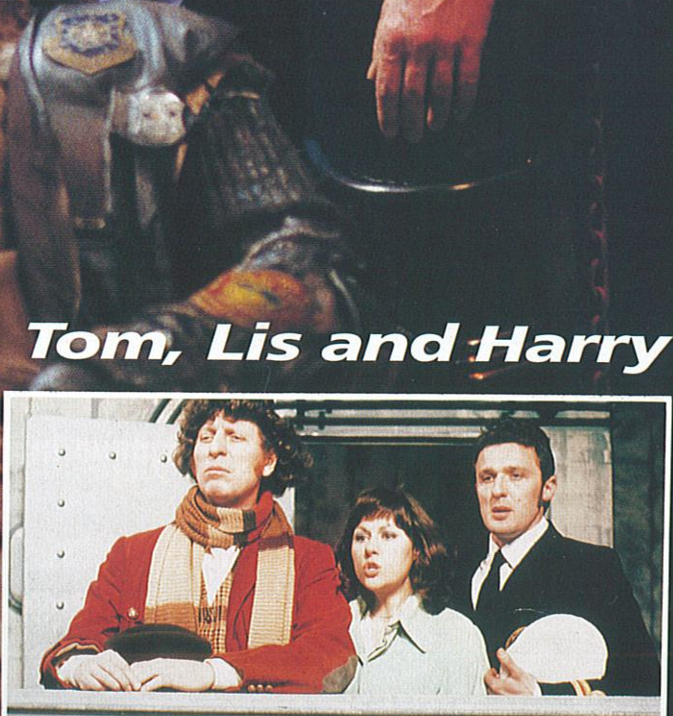
No.118 October 1993



Red Dwarf VI

Lost: One Spaceship, two miles long
Colour: Red

Tom, Lis and Harry



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PICKWICK

Dreamwatch Bulletin 118
PO Box 1015
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EDITOR
DO NOT HASSLE

Those waiting for a rant about apathetic response to the Series Survey may be pleasantly surprised to hear that this one is fast approaching its predecessors total, though don't allow that to be a cue for non-participation. We need as many forms that appeared on page 23 of DWB116 returned as possible by October 31st (photocopies will do)! The 'Doctor's Order' already seems set in concrete, but some other results are proving interesting...

We will be running your reactions to *Paradise of Death* next issue, so anyone wishing to contribute should send their comments as soon as possible after episode five's transmission...

ANTHONY

CONTENTS

Letters 8
Red Dwarf producer interview 9
Red Dwarf VI preview 10
Doctor Who photo feature 12
The Trial of a Time Lord review 13
Paradise of Death review 17
The Forgotten Decade :
Quatermass & the Pit 18
Star Trek - Next Generation episode guide 21
Iceberg review 24
Sapphire & Steel review 24
The Champions - 25th Anniversary 25

Cover: RED DWARF VI - *Gunmen of the Apocalypse.*Danny John Jules, Craig Charles and Robert Llewellyn as Cat, Lister & Kryten. (Photo © Oliver Upton);
Terror of the Zygons on UK Gold (© BBC Video)
Back cover: Colin Baker and Geoffrey Hughes as the sixth Doctor and Mr. Popplewick - *The Ultimate Foe* (©BBC Video)

THANKS TO: J Jeremy Bentham, Anthony McKay, Anthony Clark,Seamus MacGibbon, Gordon Barr, UK Gold, BBC Video, Virgin Books.

NEXT ISSUE:
A for Andromeda
Reactions to *The Paradise of Death*
QUANTUM LEAP special feature/ episode guide
Resurrection of the Daleks
& MUCH MORE!!!

NOTICES: The closing date for DWB's Half-Price Offer (ref: DWB115) is September 30th. Send £19.99 plus 4 x 1st class stamps to the editorial address for an annual subscription plus £10 worth of back issues.
•**Subsequent** to last issue's review, Archangel Media have moved to 25 Lindsay Place, Edinburgh EH6 48G.

RED DWARF Competition Results:
a) Judas, b) Quarantine.
Winners: Steve Rogers (Unabridged version), Steve Eramo, Jillian Speed, Paul Moore, Michael Healy & MissL. Parker (tapes).

DOCTOR WHO
THE NEXT REGENERATION?
"MAJOR RELAUNCH IN THE PIPELINE"...

RUMOURS are emerging of a major relaunch for DOCTOR WHO which, if it materialises, will revamp the series to the visual heights of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, and could prove to be the BBC's biggest ever co-production investment involving millions of pounds.

Whispers from within the BBC suggest that a major high-profile American production company is in the process of acquiring the US rights for the series for a set number of years, and will produce an undisclosed (though said to be "substantial") number of episodes, which the BBC would then sell to the rest of the world.

BBC1 Controller Alan Yentob is said to be immersed in top-level discussions with the company over DOCTOR WHO's future as a possible Anglo/American-made series and a deal is reportedly near to being clinched.

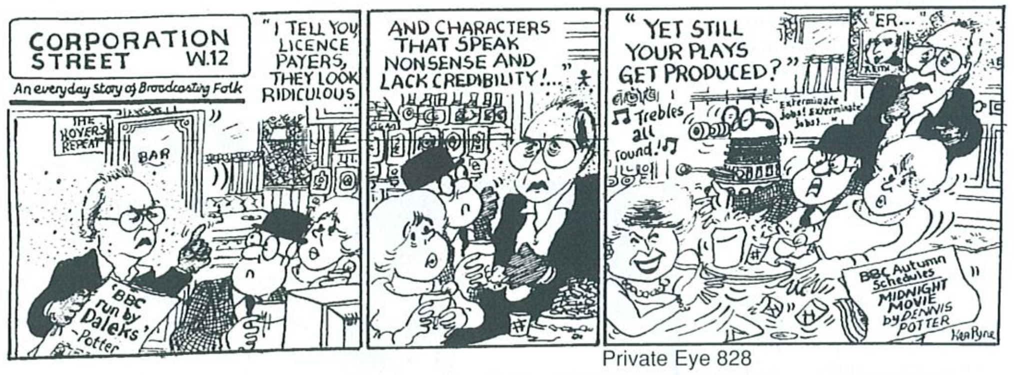
This report comes on the eve of the expiration at the end of October of Coast to Coast/Green Light's DOCTOR WHO film rights, acquired from the BBC back in the summer of 1987 but subsequently never realised.

•Since no official confirmation or denial of this story was available as we went to press, there is no point in contacting the BBC since those employed to answer viewers' queries will have no knowledge of the matter. Please be patient and wait until next issue or indeed the possibility of an official announcement before then...

DALEKS IN ARMANI SUITS!

DENNIS POTTER, the distinguished playwright gave the MacTaggert Memorial Lecture on television to the Edinburgh Television Festival in August. In a thinly veiled attack on Director General John Birt and Chairman Marmaduke Hussey, he said: *"You cannot make a pair of croak-voiced Daleks appear benevolent, even if you dress one of them in an Armani suit and call the other Marmaduke!"* He also suggested that the BBC should be broken up to save public service broadcasting if those in charge cannot be removed... With Alan Bleasdale having already criticised the BBC, and Alan Plater echoing Potter's remarks a week later, it could now be argued that all three of TV's foremost dramatists have come out against Birt's reforms...

Meanwhile, a frog, rabbit and a Dalek were among forty protesters who recently marched on the Welsh Office as part of a campaign against a proposed extension to the M4. Who was it who said that Daleks *"are virtually forgotten icons of a bygone era"*...


CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday Story of Broadcasting Folk
"I TELL YOU LICENCE PAYERS, THEY LOOK RIDICULOUS
THE HOYERS REPEAT
BAR
'BBC run by Daleks' -Potter
AND CHARACTERS THAT SPEAK NONSENSE AND LACK CREDIBILITY!..."
"YET STILL YOUR PLAYS GET PRODUCED?"
♫ Trebles all round! ♫
Exterminate Jobs! Exterminate Jobs!..."
"ER..."
BBC Autumn Schedules MIDNIGHT MOVIE by DENNIS POTTER
Ken Pyne

Private Eye 828

CHILDREN IN NEED UPDATE

CHILDREN IN NEED'S 'DOCTOR WHO meets EASTENDERS' will be recorded on the soap's Albert Square lot in Elstree on Wednesday,September 22.

It appears that a late decision has been made to take a serious approach following the appointment to the project of a regular EASTENDERS director (at one stage it was rumoured that Mr. Blobby would be unmasked as the villain of the piece!).

The use of two Sea King helicopters is also now believed to be in doubt, as the EASTENDERS set is unlikely to stand up to the effects of their rotor downdrafts, and further to last issue's report the script's author is David Mansell writing as David Rodan (not the other way round!) and the first episode is now planned to last for seven minutes while the second (on NOEL'S HOUSE PARTY) has been cut back to five.

The WHO cast are now believed to have waived their fees and it is increasingly likely that all five Doctors (with Tom Baker in cameo) will appear, as will Kate O'Mara as the Rani, Sarah Sutton and Nicholas Courtney (Katy Manning has cut short her UK stay).

Keff McCulloch is working on the incidental music.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: A one year subscription (12 issues) costs £30/US$69 (or £35/$79 for first-class card-reinforced envelopes), available from 5 Whitegate Gardens, Harrow-Weald, Middlesex HA3 6BW.
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TENTH PLANET 4
SPEARHEADS B.F.I. SEARCH

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE officially launches its nationwide campaign - at London's NFT2 on October 2 - to trace missing episodes from vintage British television series.

Titled *Missing - Believed Wiped*, the campaign will attempt to increase public awareness of the importance of retrieving what may still exist of our television heritage. As a BFI spokesman told The Daily Mail: *"Many of the lost years of British television are out there somewhere, and the archives want them back."*

Included in the top 20 of most wanted programmes is episode 4 of *The Tenth Planet* — which would complete William Hartnell's finale and the first Cyber-story — alongside such TV doyens as THE LIKELY LADS (from which only two of the original episodes are believed to survive), EMERGENCY WARD 10 and the first-ever edition of NEWS AT TEN..

The conference at the NFT will be presented by BBC archivist Adam Lee, Steve Bryant of the BFI and Tony Rowlands, late of Thames' Film Archive. Included will be screenings of recently-discovered footage from *A For Andromeda* and a recent successfully-colourised episode from *The Ambassadors of Death* which will be accompanied by a talk from Ralph Montague explaining the process employed to colourise many of the previously black and white Pertwee prints. National Film and TV archivist Brian Jenkinson will explain about the cleaning and repairing of episodes once found, such as the recently-discovered STEPTOE AND SONS.

*•**BBC VIDEO** is considering issuing the patchwork version of **The Tenth Planet** as a 'Woolworth exclusive', complete with episode 4 narration by Michael Craze. In addition to helping to reimburse the cost of the backlog of aborted John Nathan-Turner-recorded material which was never used following his departure from Enterprises last year, it would also justify the subsequent general release of a complete version should episode 4 ever be recovered.*

NO "SCANDINAVIAN TAPES"

IT WOULD APPEAR to be par for the course in the run-up to a major convention these days, but unfortunately rumours of missing Troughton episodes turning up from Scandinavia have been denied by BBC Enterprises and BBC Archives.

Word spread like wildfire throughout fandom (including DWB117) of a supposed haul of episodes — episodes 4 and 5 of *The Power of the Dalek* and *The Highlanders* and *The Macra Terror* (both complete) being the episodes most commonly mentioned — and resulted in floods of anxious telephone calls to the BBC and fan representatives such as DWM and DWB. The rumour appeared to be expanded at a later stage to suggest that the *Resurrection of the Daleks* and *The Two Doctors* video releases had been pulled from BBC Video's November schedule, fuelling the myth that the supposedly newly-discovered gems were being cleared for rush-release, while Michael Craze was reported to have given clearances for 'missing stories' (a comment which could have referred to the *Power* audio, or the proposed Woolworths release of *Tenth Planet*).

Still missing: *The Macra Terror*

……

•THE CURSE OF PELADON **continues the trend of recent video releases of hanging around a 2nd week in the Gallup top 20 chart, this time falling from 5 to 16...**

•FANS disgruntled at the Americanised cardboard boxes housing the recent tinned tapes might like to know that enterprising BBC Enterprises will be re-releasing them individually in the standard plastic boxes in 1995...

•FOLLOWING a successful signing of the Dalek boxed-set on September 6th by Sylvester McCoy, Colin Baker will be appearing at the Virgin Megastore in Oxford Street on October 4th at 1pm to sign the TARDIS box-set comprising *Trial of a Time Lord*, which will retail at £34.99. Enterprises have asked us to point out that it could be delayed by up to one week in some areas due to distribution problems with the suppliers of the tins...

•DWM206 will be featuring lots of *ToaTL* material to tie-in with the release, including interviews with Pip & Jane Baker and Dominic Glyn, and Colin Baker himself writing on the making of the season. The issue will also include an interview with the late Victor *(Fury from the Deep)* Maddern, a *Planet of Fire* archive and the last instalment of the comicstrip *Genesis* (out October 29). CLASSIC COMICS 13 will include the Hartnell/Zarbi strip *Doctor Who on the Web Planet* and Jon Pertwee in an adventure with the 'Vgrakks', (out October 15).

The first in a four-issue comic book series, *The Age of Chaos* by Colin Baker, will be published late in November...

YEAR OF THE YETI

DOWNTIME, the forthcoming Myth Makers production which will mark the completion of the Yeti trilogy, will go into production next spring for a late summer '94 release.

In an exciting new development for the project, which was put on hold when news of *The Dark Dimension* entering production emerged, Deborah Watling and her father Jack are to reprise their popular sixties roles of Victoria and Travers, joining Nicholas Courtney as the Brigadier and possibly John Levene as Benton if he is available to fly over from America.

Ghostlight author Marc Platt has written the script, which producer Keith Barnfather says is stylistically a hybrid between the sixties and eighties approach to WHO storytelling, and WHO stalwart Christopher Barry will make a welcome return as director.

At around 50 minutes duration, Barnfather explains that *"it is as near to WHO as you can get within the copyright confines that exist"*, having cleared the inclusion of the Yeti, the Brigadier and Travers with their creators Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln.

•Louise Jameson's MythMakers' tape was rush-released in time for Panopticon and is available from John Fitton, 1 Orchard Way, Hensall, Nr. Goole, North Humberside DN14 0RT.

•Sylvester McCoy's inclusion into the range will be shot at Rutland Water - which provided the scenic backdrop for *Battlefield* - in late autumn for January 1 release. Nicholas Courtney and Sophie Aldred will be making brief cameo appearances.

•REELTIME PICTURES are planning a series of videos featuring stars from general telefantasy series to compliment their successful range of WHO-orientated MythMakers releases...

VIRGIN CONFIRM
"MISSING ADVENTURES"

VIRGIN BOOKS have given the green light to THE MISSING ADVENTURES — a series of books to run concurrently with THE NEW ADVENTURES — chronicling the undocumented events that occurred at various points in the first six Doctors' respective timestreams. When up-and-running some time next year, Virgin will publish a new DOCTOR WHO novel once a fortnight, alongside the monthly Marvel publications and BBC Videos. Peter Darvill-Evans is currently compiling his MISSING ADVENTURES Guidelines for writers (which we hope to reproduce in DWB shortly), and has requested that no manuscripts be sent for consideration at this stage...

Doctor Who
THE ROBOTS OF DEATH
based on a DOCTOR WHO adventure first broadcast in 1977
TERRANCE DICKS

UK GOLD
October schedule

UK GOLD's October schedules, which would appear to suggest that they have an aversion to Chris Boucher stories, are as follows...

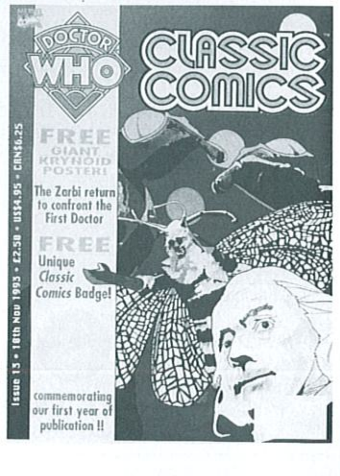
(**3rd:** *The Pyramids of Mars* omnibus)
4th - 11th: *The Seeds of Doom*
12th - 15th: *The Masque of Mandragora*
18th - 21st: *The Hand of Fear*
22nd - 27th: *The Deadly Assassin*
28th - 4th (Nov): *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*

ALAN DISDALE

***It was with great sadness that DWB received the news** of Alan's untimely death at the end of August. A friend to DWB and a familiar face at many conventions over the year's, it is only fitting that Space Mountain III at The Prince's Theatre, Clacton-on-Sea over the weekend of October 22-24th will be held in his memory. The event is being billed as the last Space Mountain, and if the first two are anything to go by then an entertaining weekend is guaranteed.*

For further details send a SAE to Space Mountain III, 9 Station Road, Kelvedon, Essex CO5 9NW...

DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE
INSIDE: POSTCARDS THE LAST OF SET 1
PLANET OF FIRE


DOCTOR WHO
CLASSIC COMICS
FREE GIANT KRYNOID POSTER
The Zarbi return to confront the First Doctor
FREE Unique Classic Comics Badge
commemorating our first year of publication !!

briefly...

JANET FIELDING, who achieved national notoriety for exposing her former husband for his part in the 'Irangate' arms affair, has emerged as the bitterest among several ex-WHO companions in a Sunday Telegraph feature examining their subsequent careers. In it she laments how quickly acting assignments dried up after Tegan but enthused about her new found role as a devout feminist.

Janet recently turned down an invitation to participate in the EASTENDERS crossover, declaring that as she was no longer an actress she saw no point in going backwards in time...

THE LATEST editions to Philip Robinson's superlative range of figurines - an Ogron and Scaroth - are now available, completing his 1993 catalogue which also includes a Voord and Sharaz Jek. For further information on his acclaimed series of sculptures, send a SAE to Philip at: 32 Canterbury Road, Newton Hall, Durham DH1 5PX...

RECYCLING - everyone seems to be at it these days! Last month we proudly mentioned that the Daily Mail had used Jeremy Bentham's extensive *Dark Dimension* cancellation report from DWB115 as the basis for a lead television article. Well, the September issue of TV Zone quotes extensively from *"a recent **expose** in The Daily Mail..."*

MICHAEL FERGUSON, a popular ex-WHO director, was responsible for the train disaster that afflicted the city of Holby when CASUALTY returned to BBC1recently for its eighth season. The 56 year old producer said: *"This episode is brilliant. It's a great tribute to the programme itself"*. The 50-minute episode, which required nearly five months of preparation, cost the BBC an estimated £750,000 - equalling the cost BBC Enterprises quoted to produce the 96-minute DOCTOR WHO 30th anniversary special... Corrine Hollingsworth, Davison era production manager on DOCTOR WHO and former EASTENDERS and ELDORADO producer, has been appointed to supervise CASUALTY'S transformation into a twice weekly soap.

ALISTER PEARSON has pulled out of Danbury Mint's commemorative WHO plate venture. Although he had painstakingly completed three-quarters of his first commission (see last issue), Pearson allegedly finally decided that enough was enough after having to turned away £9000-worth of other commissions to complete the plate - which itself would have netted him in the region of only £800. Alister was unavailable for comment over the matter, but he has confirmed his commission for *The Paradise of Death* book cover, and that he is also being canvassed by Peter Darvill-Evans to regularly contribute to the forthcoming *The Missing Stories...*

THE PIRATE PLANET* Script Book** (see DWB117 for details) has been delayed until next year. Although the green light was given at the beginning of August, an unforeseen obstacle has emerged. Meanwhile Douglas Adams is rumoured to be "tinkering" with his original scripts prior to their anticipated publication. ***The Abominable Snowmen may now be pulled forward, although still awaiting clearance, and Titan Books are also looking at the possibility of issuing a Hartnell historical...

WILLIAM EMMS, author of the 1965 yarn *Galaxy 4*, has passed away.

FOUR CLIPS from *The Seeds of Death* accompanied a Radio 1 news item about the Mars space probe which was lost recently, in keeping with the station's celebrated 'plug-WHO' policy...

THIS MORNING with Richard and Judy on Thursday, September 30, will be paying homage to DOCTOR WHO, and will include footage from Panopticon...

(AND FINALLY, Danny John-Jules' single of Tongue-Tied from the RED DWARF episode *Parallel Universe* will be released in early October...)

DOCTORS & VI BLAST DARK DIMENSION

ADRIAN RIGELSFORD, author of the aborted 96-minute DOCTOR WHO special *The Dark Dimension*, has received overwhelming support from numerous fans and professional personnel alike amid an apparent campaign by certain actors and Visual Imagination publications to discredit his involvement with the project.

Following snipings from one notoriously outspoken actor come spokesman in the press, Starburst 180 gleefully reported that: *"...The fan-turned-author of the script entitled The Dark Dimension, Adrian Rigelsford, must be really upset to see his great hope for fame and the renewal of his favourite programme quoshed"*, while an interview in 181 with Pertwee, Davison, Colin Baker and McCoy, seemed to be designed specifically to evoke several unflattering references to the author and his script.

Meanwhile over at TV Zone, a vociferous letter from a "C M Wadley" was published beginning: *"When appointing blame for the cancellation of the DOCTOR WHO anniversary project, the major share must surely go to Adrian Rigelsford..."*, and was followed by an editorial comment by Jan Vincent-Rudzki, stating that, *"Mr. Wrigglesford* (sic) *has received a fair amount of negative criticism over his WHO plot. It also seems that he is responsible for writing the text for the BBC video WHO sleeves, and many DOCTOR WHO fans thought they were written by someone who knew nothing about the series! Perhaps the loss of his story was a narrow escape?"*

As Visual Imagination and Colin Baker clearly doubt Rigelsford's credentials as a writer, it will come as a surprise for them to learn that he has written several scripts that have seen production, including the films SCOTCH ON THE ROCKS and SONS OF THE DESERT, as well as the BBC-financed GALAHAD OF EVEREST starring Brian Blessed!

Visual Imagination's apparent animosity is believed to stem from Rigelsford's involvement with the Who Dares Cyberbook in the late '80s when Vincent-Rudzki provided several photographs from his mysterious hoard of unpublished material depicting the sets of *The Tomb of the Cybermen* for Andrew Skilleter to use as reference in his artwork, having dubiously insisted that the photos themselves were not to be reproduced. They were subsequently returned, but early last year DWM published a *Tomb*-orientated issue (coincidentally at the time of its return to the BBC) containing the **same** set photos! Vincent-Rudzki was subsequently witnessed verbally attacking Rigelsford for his supposed treachery at the BBC Enterprises *Tomb* video launch, convinced that he had duplicated and sold copies on to DWM. DWM's copies in fact derived from the official BBC source long before the Who Dares book was conceived!

•It is understood that if any publication breaches their copyright by referring in detail or reproducing in any way segments of the script or plotline to *The Dark Dimension, then* BBC Enterprises will take action to safeguard their interests.

•In what appears to be a major upheaval at Visual Imagination, MythMakers supremo Nicholas Briggs has resigned from the staff, stating, *"I decided I couldn't achieve what I wanted to achieve being there."* John Ainsworth has also tendered his resignation as editor of VI's newly-acquired Film Review.

JAUNTING BACK AGAIN!

TETRA FILMS have just completed the first of two new five-part TOMORROW PEOPLE stories, following the successful '90s revival of the cult '70s telefantasy series last year.

A new character called Ami, played by Naomie Harris, joins the regular cast this season, replacing Kristen Ariza's Lisa. She joins Kristian Schmid (Adam), Christian Tessier (Megabyte) and Adam Pearce (Kevin) in the regular line-up.

For only the second (and third!) time in TTP's history Roger Price is not involved in the scripting, which instead has been overseen by the writing team of Lee Pressman and Grant Cathro, also responsible for Children's ITV's 'Alien on Earth' comedy MIKE AND ANGELO . No titles have been announced as yet, but appearing in the first story are Jean Marsh and Connie Booth, with Peggy Mount and Ian McNee in the second.

Co-produced once again by Thames and Nickleodeon, the episodes - shot on Super 16mm film - will be broadcast during 1994.

MORE DARK SHADOWS?

A DARK SHADOWS movie script, featuring the 1991 cast, is being considered for production by several American studios.

Described as a "stand alone" feature, Jim Pierson at Dan Curtis Productions told DWB correspondent John S. Hall that none of the "dangling plot lines" from the 1991 series would be resolved. The long-running US telefantasy soap is currently seen twice-daily on the Sci-Fi Channel with four videos from the original series released every month and the 1991 series released at the rate of one episode a month...

Coming Soon...

Just out...

23rd	**NEXT GENERATION**: *Guises of the Mind* (Rebecca Neason)
30th	STAR TREK reprint: *Ghost Walker* (Barbara Hambly)
30th	STAR TREK reprint: *Doctor's Orders* (Diane Duane)
30th	STAR TREK reprint: *Web of the Romulans* (MS Murdock)

October

4th	**DOCTOR WHO:***Fury from the Deep* (Audio Collection)
4th	**DOCTOR WHO:***The Trial of a Time Lord* (Boxed video set)
4th	**Signing with Colin Baker at Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street.**
4th	**DEEP SPACE NINE:** *The Passenger, Move Along Home* (video)
4th	**DEEP SPACE NINE:** *The Nagus, Vortex* (video)
18th	**NEXT GENERATION:** *Tapestry, Birthright I* (video)
18th	**NEXT GENERATION:** *Birthright II, Starship Mine* (video)
20th	**STAR TREK:** *The Great Starship Race* (Diane Carey)
21st	**THE NEW ADVENTURES**: *Bloodheat* (Jim Mortimore)
21st	**DOCTOR WHO -** Timeframe (David Howe)
21st	DOCTOR WHO reprint: *The Leisure Hive* (David Fisher)
30th	STAR TREK reprint: *The Romulan Way* (Duane/Morwood)
30th	STAR TREK reprint: *Bloodthirst* (JM Dillard)

November

Delay	**DOCTOR WHO - THE SCRIPTS**: *The Pirate Planet* (Douglas Adams)
1st	**DOCTOR WHO:** *Resurrection of the Daleks* (video)
1st	**DOCTOR WHO:***The Two Doctors* (video)
8th	**DEEP SPACE NINE**: *Battle Lines, The Storyteller* (video)
8th	**DEEP SPACE NINE**: *Progress, If Wishes were Horses* (video)
15th	STAR TREK: *The Price of the Phoenix* (Marshak & Culbreath)
18th	**THE NEW ADVENTURES:** *The Dimension Riders* (Daniel Blythe)
18th	DOCTOR WHO reprint: *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* (Malcolm Hulke)
22nd	**NEXT GENERATION**: *Lessons, The Chase* (video)
22nd	**NEXT GENERATION**: *Frame of Mind, Suspicions* (video)

THE NEW STAR TREK NOVEL
THE GREAT STARSHIP RACE
DIANE CAREY

Doctor Who
THE LEISURE HIVE
DAVID FISHER

POLICE BOX
BBC
THE TRIAL OF A TIME LORD
DOCTOR WHO
Starring COLIN BAKER

G A P IS GO!

GERRY ANDERSON PRODUCTIONS, the new £10million TV production company headed by the the Supermarionation maestro himself, is investigating remaking Anderson's most famous sixties series - Thunderbirds and Captain Scarlet - with modern effects.

It is about to commence work on GFI, a 13-episode animated series for Meridian TV, and as reported in DWB last year will embark on its major project, Space Police, in conjunction with Merton films in 1994. A further space fantasy series, Lavender Castle, will enter production shortly.

Other proposed projects include a live-action show called Apeman, and Astrobots, featuring a race whose culture is based solely on garbled TV signals from Earth. All series made by the company will be exploited to their full commercial potential.

•**THE COMMISSION** For Racial Equality is seeing red over Captain Scarlet which begins a rerun on BBC2 in October, because of the show's representations of good and evil. Scarlet's boss Colonel White and the evil Captain Black, *"perpetuate racial stereotypes"*, a spokesman told The Daily Mail recently, because, *"Captain Black reflects a bygone attitude from a bygone age"*. An asian councillor from Bristol is calling on the BBC to scrap the repeats, despite the positive portrayal of black people in the characters of Lieutenant Green and Melody - in itself a bold and revolutionary move when Gerry Anderson made the series back in the sixties.

•Captain Scarlet will commence transmission at 6.00pm on Friday evenings from early October followed by more repeats from the third season of The Man From U.N.C.L.E.

AUSSIES CELEBRATE 30th ANNIVERSARY IN STYLE!

WHOVENTION II - Australian fandom's 30th anniversary answer to Panopticon and Visions '93 - was a roaring success in Sydney recently.

Over 300 fans turned out to see Katy Manning, Mark Strickson and guest of honour Mary Tamm, who was specially flown in from England for the event, plus the surprise appearance of Jan Troughton, daughter of Patrick. By some bizarre coincidence Mark Strickson discovered that she was one of his students in the drama course he conducts at the University of New England in Armidale near Sydney!

Over $5000 from proceeds raised at the event have been donated to The Save the Children Fund, with a further $1000 going to a British charity of Mary's choice.

Melbourne will be honouring Doctor Who's 30th anniversary with Whose Thirty at Melbourne Town Hall over the weekend of November 6-7th, featuring Katy Manning, Mark Strickson, Alexandra Tynan and Robert Jewell.

Star Trek news

WORK is continuing on the seventh season of The Next Generation with the following episodes now filmed...

In the two parter *Gambit*, which has proven extremely expensive due to its high location content, Picard takes leave to work at an archeological dig. Arriving to pick him up, Riker is told that Picard was vapourised two days before, and sets out after the killers vowing revenge. Captured by them, he finds Picard aboard their ship manning a duty station. Picard manages to knock him out before he can say anything that might reveal his identity, as the mercenaries, in search of an ancient Vulcan psi-weapon, have kidnapped Picard believing him to be a civilian archeologist who can assist their quest. Riker succeeds in convincing his captors that he has gone rogue and wishes to join them, forcing the 'civilian' Picard to pretend emnity towards the 'renegade' Starfleet officer who **should** be rescuing him...

•*Phantasm*, directed by Patrick Stewart, concerns nightmares which are plaguing Data, among them one where Deanna turns into a cake which Data eats...!

•In *Dark Page* Lwaxana Troi falls into a deep coma while aboard the Enterprise, forcing Deanna to enter her mind to revive her. While in there, she discovers a dark secret...

•And in *Attached*, directed by Jonathan Frakes, Beverley and Picard are captured while on an away mission, and shackled together. Escaping like fugitives from a chain gang, their enforced proximity forces them to re-examine their relationship...

•Lt Barclay was, in the end, absent from *Descent II* when Dwight Schultz proved to be busy at the last minute. He is however expected to return later in the season, while Robin Williams, Dana (*Wayne's World*) Carvey and singer Robert Palmer are said to be hoping to appear on the show.

•*The Inner Light* won the prestigious Hugo award for screen science fiction in the face of strong opposition from big screen movies. The original series had previously won the award for *City at the Edge of Forever*.

•DS9 plans to feature the wheelchair bound alien from a low-gravity planet who was originally to have been the station's science officer in a second season episode.

•Patrick Stewart is close to confirming plans to bring his one-man version of *A Christmas Carol* to the Savoy Theatre in the West End over Christmas and the New Year (December 27th - January 8th). He is also considering an offer to tour in *The King and I*, and to appear in *Sweeney Todd* for the National Theatre.

Blue Box & Manopticon

IT'S SOME TIME NOW since Blue Box and Manopticon were held in May, but with repeats of both planned for next year, it seems sensible to look back to them as we cover Panopticon...

Blue Box was very much a small-to-medium convention, based in a series of college rooms across the room from the Hotel where most of the attendees were staying (and the bar was to be found!) Despite this, the social atmosphere of the convention proved superb, with the bar packed with guests and fans freely mingling late into the night, while the con itself attracted a string of highly notable guests, among them Lis Sladen in her first UK appearance for years. An added frission was given to her appearance, and those of Barry Letts and Peter Miles, by the fact that *Paradise of Death* was, at the time, in the middle of recordings, and the sight of Peter Miles flicking through his script and raising his eyebrows at what he was going to be expected to do was particularly memorable! Hit of the con though was Lis Sladen's daughter Sadie, who took an instant liking to a Cyberman, and barely left his side all weekend...

The darling of Manopticon was Anneke Wills, who spared no blushes while describing her time on the series. A larger con than Blue Box, Manopticon nonetheless retained the informal atmosphere of all the best cons, and certain controversies were, fortunately, not allowed to get in the way of a good time. Would that that description could be applied to my Have I Got News for Who debut — suffice it to say, Alec Charles only escaped murder by engaging Anneke Wills in conversation and thereby gaining her protection!

Flawlessly professional throughout, Manopticon would be difficult to criticise, if the fluctuating bar prices imposed by the Hotel Piccadilly as they tried to milk the market are ignored. Manopticon '94 is likely to be that year's 'unmissable' con — but its worth taking in one of the smaller ones as well, and Blue Box '94 will do just fine...

Anthony Brown

A veritable Who's who at Blue Box

CLASSIFIEDS

REMEMBRANCE - A Doctor Who/Cult TV Show Fanzine. Issue 4 is now available! Contents include 1980's Dalek Overview, Fan Fiction, Future of Doctor Who and great Artwork! Plus Much More Inside!! Please Send £l (Coinage) & A5 SAE To: Robert Bradley, 23 Lee Lane, Langley, Heanor, Derbyshire DE75 7HN.

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FOR SALE Issues of DWM plus specials, TV Zone, Red Dwarf smegazine 1-15, DWB, Viz Comic, Planet of the Apes. Autographed Doctor Who items. Send SAE for full list to - Craig Foulkes, 2 Walnut Grove, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L66 2JZ.

EYE OF HARMONY: issue 4 - New Adventures specials is out now! Are they canonical? Was *Transit* really that bad? Will Ace ever leave? These questions may or not be answered. Buy it to find out! £2 (cheque) from Leslie P Hollis, 40 Cotterills Lane, Alum Rock, Birmingham, B8 3ER.

SPECTRUM: 'KaboomWatch'. By Nick Goodman. As the gap in Spectrum Street's ozone layer widens, Doctor Quisty Baby and his team investigate (and/or wear loud shirts). Send cheque for £1.25 payable to Andrew Trowbridge at 4 New Cottages, Manor Farm, Monkton-up-Wimborne, Dorset BH21 5NL.

REMEMBRANCE '93: Manchester, 13-14th November. Guests subject to work include Frazer Hines, Michael Jayston, Peter Miles, plus surprise guests. Including The Trial of Davros stage presentation with music by Mark Ayres. Display of BBC props and costumes. Send SAE to 1 Birtle Drive, Aspley, Atherton, Manchester M29 7NQ.

SMALL ADS - £3.95 for 50 words

PANOPTICON '93

PANOPTICON '93 was perhaps the biggest convention ever held in Britain, and certainly the largest I've ever been to. The guest list for the weekend was quite stupendous and, more importantly, everyone billed to attend was there. Saturday was particularly impressive (after a false start as the TARDIS doors on the impressive set failed to open, and the video monitors failed to display the introductory sequence first time), as a string of previously unseen guests (for most of the audience it seems), such as Elisabeth Sladen and Louise Jameson, stepped out onto the stage. Katy Manning was delightfully dizzy, recounting wonderful anecdotes about suffering from myopia, and memorably dragging from the audience a young man who asked if she had any plans to resume her modelling career, to tell him what a naughty boy he was. Jon Pertwee seemed content to let her chatter away, aware of whom the audience wanted to see.

However, entertaining though most of these guests were, they were only on for a brief time.The whole set up was reminiscent of Wogan — wheel them on, chat to them, get them off again (well the interesting ones at least)! This was particularly irritating as a number of episodes were run, most of which were out on BBC Video, had been shown on UK Gold or BBC2, or were even on in the video room! A definite black mark.

Other black marks were the extremely poor sound quality and lack of seating in the main hall — 900 seats for 1200+ attendees. Still, never mind. After a 'bijou panelette' on *Paradise of Death* , Tom Baker strode out of the TARDIS doors unannounced, to ramble on for over an hour about God, dogs, and how he had bought his own tombstone but recently found that someone had written 'w****r' on it! He managed to turn his answer to a question on his influences into ten minutes on his relationship with God, so moving Anneke Wills that she went over to him, hugged him and told him that he was lovely and she regretted never working with him! It was magnificent — nothing and no-one is as entertaining on stage as Tom Baker, and his appearance alone was worth the £30+ entrance fee!

Reaction to the fifteen pound a head buffet was mixed, with some complaining about poor food, while others enthused about how friendly it was and how the guests were mixing freely and giving out autographs and allowing pictures to be taken. Just as well, for those who weren't prepared to pay £12 to take photos, and £5 to get autographs at **each** of the numerous sessions held in the exhibition area. A bit much I think.

The exhibition itself wasn't quite as glorious as had been suggested, but there were some rare items (including the *Myth Makers'* Trojan Horse). The costume exhibits particularly tended to be highly amusing, displayed as they were on dummies which had apparently escaped from Grace Brothers circa 1970...

Sunday began with Mary Tamm and Lalla Ward, again on for too short a period of time, and I'd rather have seen them separately. Matthew Waterhouse and Janet Fielding were on shortly after, with Matthew showing himself to be a much more interesting and articulate person than Adric ever was, while Janet bravely risked lynching by suggesting that those present should campaign for something new in place of Doctor Who with its dated and unbelievable female companions.

The majority of the afternoon was taken up with Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant, and then Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred. Both the latter are interesting and very nice people, but I'd heard it all so many times before, and it seemed criminal that they were on for 90 minutes, while Lalla only got half an hour!

Finally an appearance by Jon Pertwee, Colin Baker, Sylvester McCoy and a newly arrived Peter Davison, at which they fielded many questions on the fate of *The Dark Dimension* led into the closing ceremony. I left with renewed enthusiasm for the series after a generally well organised and smoothly run event (shame about the bar prices). Doctor Who may be off our screens, but fandom is alive and kicking.

Amanda Murray

briefly...

GMTV, on September 3rd, interviewed Jon Pertwee and Katy Manning in the run-up to Panopticon, and also featured a Dalek joining in an aerobic workout with 'Mr. Motivator'. Agent Roger Hancock was reportedly annoyed at seeing his client's creation sent up in such a way...

•**BBC ENTERPRISES**, impressed at the turnout and commercial exploitation of Panopticon '93 - which saw autographs charged at £5 each and specially commissioned photographs of some of the stars selling for £12 - are reportedly considering staging a second two-day event at Longleat next year, tieing in with the exhibition's 20th anniversary...

•**TIME OUT**, the popular London listing's magazine, gave a prominent plug to Panopticon '93, but also drew equal attention to the pettiness that prevails in Fandom by mentioning that *"...the anoraks are still at war. The Doctor Who Appreciation Society has apparently banned the editor of DWB magazine (formerly Doctor Who Bulletin)...for peddling a galactically incorrect line on the Doctor. Exterminate!"* The only plug provided in London's newspaper The Standard was in the form of an advert in the entertainments section, and the event subsequently attracted in the region of 2,500 people - half of whom paid £5 for the exhibition only - which was lower than the anticipated turn-out.

•**STAGEPLAN,** a design company which employs elder statesman fan Richard Landen, has written to Dominitemporal Services Limited requesting payment for plans which they claim they were contracted to design for the main hall set at Panopticon, but which were allegedly subsequently "hijacked" by the BBC. Stageplan and Landen himself maintain that they spent much time and effort on the exercise before Dominitemporal Services were instructed by the BBC to use their own contractors - or face having their exhibits and the right to show episodes withdrawn. Whilst sympathetic to Landen, Dominitemporal Services reluctantly complied with the BBC's directive, but Landen is insisting that Stageplan's original ideas were then incorporated by the BBC into the finished set...

INFERNO, the October scottish-based convention advertised in DWB 115 has been cancelled. Registrations will be refunded.

MY PANOPTICON '93 DIARY

by "Banned" DWB Publisher

***"DON'T let the b*st*rds get you down!"*, was the battlecry echoed by most people who knew of the DWAS's banning of myself in person from Panopticon '93 (even Time Out!).**

What I personally found so insidious about the affair was that DWB would still be available for purchase at the event - afterall, at £1000+ per stall the dealers could hardly be told what they could and couldn't sell (although at least one dealer did have cause to feel indignant at the dictatorial attitude displayed by Ian Cooke, who was in charge of this aspect of the event) - which is why I interpreted their decision as a personal and mean-spirited slur. There was no way that I was going to take this insult lying down, however...

As 'sad fan' Roderick Blythe - donned in various items of attire associated with the first four Doctors (I drew the line at a suggestion of a stick of celery!) - I arrived at the Novotel on the Saturday and was there until 2.15pm on the Saturday when, at the Marvel table in the exhibition hall, artist Paul Vyse recognised me...from the shape of my nose! I was marched out by a silently defeated Cooke and a burly security guard, but not before I had had time to view the exhibits and make my purchases.

The exhibition suite, I thought, was suitably laid out, highlighted by displays of original BBC props and costumes - which reputedly cost a five-figure sum to hire - and Julian Vince's stunning tableaux recreating memorable scenes from the sixties, the most breathtaking being a scale replica of the Emperor Dalek from *The Evil of the Daleks* which he only completed that same morning! The dealers were all doing a roaring trade, despite the setback of not being allowed to sell the Dalek tins or *Paradise of Death* cassette, although available in the shops just two days later, but probably the best new item available on the day was the DWAS's own tribute marking the series' 30th anniversary; a glossy magazine comprising contributions from near enough all of the major names and star guests in the series' history, each noting their most lasting memory and predictions for Doctor Who's future. At £6 a copy (although "sponsored by Virgin") and in view of its celebratory theme, it's a shame that personal prejudices had to mar such a joyous publication (several notable names, including Eric Saward, were not invited to contribute), but a splendid publication nonetheless!

Returning a little later on as 'Ray G. Higel', who can only be described as a repugnent-looking long-haired slob, there was much mirth, applause and flashing of cameras when I eventually revealed myself at the hotel bar on the Saturday evening - even organiser Andrew Beech saw the funny side and invited me back in person the following day, which prompted me to shamefully hand back the gold guest badge given to me by a celebrity who I had earlier 'borrowed' to help revise an interview for the forthcoming *DWB Interview File*!

On the Sunday I returned as 'Roderick Blythe', just for the fun of it, but was clearly not welcome by the DWAS exec. - and was coldly refused entry by Cooke into the exhibition suite. Then at 3.00pm, coming out of the pub loo I bumped into John Scott Martin (who I'd interviewed in 1988 (ref: DWB60)), but before he could return my greeting he was grabbed by the imposing figure of DWAS Co-ordinator Steve Wickham, and, while clearly bewildered and a little shaken, the elderly actor was ordered away. Wickham then accused me of "harassing" his guests and I was swiftly ejected from the Novotel!

Returning in a 'master' disguise (which I won't go into detail here in case it's needed in the future!) I returned in time for the four Doctors panel to witness a slice of convention history being made.

Of what I saw, I can sympathise with many of those present who felt uncomfortable with the scale and commercialisation of the event, but in the circumstances it was expertly handled by Dominitemporal Services (namely Andrew Beech and Colin Griffiths). The poor sound quality in the main hall was unfortunate, and it was a shame to see some 'behind the scenes' faces who were not included in the panel sessions walking around looking lonely and baffled as to where they were supposed to be - who spotted Philip Hinchcliffe, who breezed in fleetingly to say "hi" to Elisabeth Sladen, and promptly left?! But the positive aspects vastly outweighted the bad. Few people will forget the breathtaking Tom Baker panel in a hurry, or the quality of the buffet food on the Saturday night come to that!

It's hard to see what Dominitemporal Services could do next, since a Who convention of this scale would be impossible to achieve on an annual basis - and of course the novelty value would soon wear off. Expansion into general telefantasy would probably be a wise move well worth considering...

Gary Leigh

Right to Reply — The DWAS & V A T

Tony Jordan
Former DWAS Co-Ordinator

AFTER MANY YEARS when I have had nothing to do with fandom, I have this year found myself embroiled in a very unpleasant wrangle with the DWAS, and this article gives me a chance to put the record straight about this situation, and perhaps about some of the modus operandi of its' Executive.

When I became Co-Ordinator in September 1985, I was horrified to find a Society that was effectively bankrupt and with seemingly little or no future. Through the sheer hard work and enthusiasm of a talented group of people the decline was reversed and the future of the DWAS seemingly assured. With our 'task' complete, may of us resigned to seek pastures and challenges new.

The scene now shifts to April 1993, when a chance phone call leads to my discovery of an article published some two months earlier in the February issue of CT headed "VAT 1984 to 1987 - The end of the road!!!".

I was, quite frankly, aghast reading its' contents. The DWAS Executive had decided, I think in 1989, to revoke the Life Memberships granted to former Executive Members in recognition of their hard work on behalf of the Society. I had wondered why such a petty and unreasonable decision had been made, but the article made it all clear. They had spent four and a half years trying to persuade HM Customs and Excise to instigate proceedings against myself and several other people in respect of Value Added Tax.

Not only was this behaviour under handed, it was totally without foundation: and now to compound it all, the Executive had as an entity, published a lengthy article concerning their action, libelling my name and damaging my reputation.

My response was shift. My solicitors advised the DWAS Executive that I was preparing to issue libel proceedings in the High Court unless a full apology was printed in CT. The best that they were initially prepared to do was to send a photocopy of a reply in an issue of CT by Andrew Beech to a letter sent by another former Executive member John Connors complaining about the total inaccuracy of the article. It was palpably obvious that the situation was not being taken seriously. However, following further correspondence, and just prior to the issue of proceedings, an apology was offered which was duly published in the July issue of CT. DWB has noted that this was 'an unprecedented display of regret' by the DWAS Executive, and although this is true, the battle that was necessary to obtain it indicates the prevalent attitude.

Perhaps the most galling issue in this matter is that the Executive, in their apology, wrote that they accepted that although their 'statement was made in good faith, the allegation was proved to be untrue and without foundation'. It was incumbent upon the Executive to verify the facts before publication, which they palpably failed to do. It is interesting that at the same time the article was published the Society Co-Ordinator was writing to Gary Leigh complaining of 'another inaccurate jibe at the DWAS' and that 'it is not in the interests of the DWAS to assist in any way someone who is intent on damaging our reputation' (DWB112). It is to the enormous detriment of the Society that its' Executive does not seem to be able to act in a manner that it feels appropriate for others. And what would have happened if all the years of lobbying HM Customs & Excise had been successful and they had issued some sort of proceedings against myself and others? Given the total retraction of the allegations against us, the logical conclusion is that we would have had issued counter proceedings against the Society which would have been unable to defend them and would, with the burden of costs, have gone out of existence.

Perhaps DWAS members should bear this in mind, and the debt of thanks they owe HM Customs & Excise.

The DARK DIMENSION READERS' REACTION

Simon C Jerram
Manchester

Disappointed, upset, cheated, angry, not to mention contemptuous of the sheer incompetence and stupidity of the BBC board of governors [sic]. I think the above will neatly sum up the contents of DWB's letters pages. I first heard the bad news second hand, but disbelieved the (inaccurate) tales of squabbling actors with bruised egos. Then on returning from a pleasant summer break I popped into my local SF bookstore to buy DWM and DWB, and the news hit me. I cannot believe that the board are so out of touch with their own corporation that they only brought the special into question after months of planning and speculation. I also cannot believe that they chose to take action while the key people were away doing constructive business. Surely it wouldn't have hurt to put it on hold, for the few days it would take to get those responsible to answer for the project. I sincerely hope that BBC Enterprises do go ahead with the special for video only, and the pessimists aren't proved right yet again.

On the subject of the other special, I would like to say I was pleased to see that *The Paradise of Death* gained some rather decent coverage in the Radio Times, leaving aside the fact that they can't tell the difference between the character of "The Doctor" and the series of "Doctor Who" (or is this evidence of one too many throwbacks?). I know there will be the idiot tendencies whose prejudices against the media of radio drama will rubbish this project without even listening to it, but I think drama deserves the airtime more than the endless repetitious stream of chart music some stations put out.

David Green
Melton Mowbray

Well, it has to be said that the BBC have surpassed themselves this time. Only they could build up and promote a Doctor Who 30th anniversary special and then cancel the thing as it was virtually in production. Perhaps I am being a bit cynical, but the cancellation at such a late stage for such suspect reasons ('financial and logistical' indeed - if they knew they didn't have the money then why proceed so far with the project?) suggests to me that the series has determined enemies unaccounted for in the the upper echelons of the BBC.

Even more worrying though was the news I saw on ITV Teletext in the last few days that the BBC "definitely has no plans for a new series" of Doctor Who.

These two pieces of news when combined give me the unsettling impression that this may be what the Doctor himself called 'the final end.' I suggest all your readers put pen to paper and tell the BBC what they really think - hmm, it might be an idea not to take that literally.

David Sheldrick
Lewisham

The cancellation fiasco is a sad indictment of the state of the BBC under Birtism. Under the pre-Birt BBC the Drama Department would simply have considered whether the idea of a thirtieth anniversary show was a good one, and if they decided 'yes' would have put up the money to produce it. Now we have this absurd process of two separate bodies within the same organisation being set against each other in an artificially imposed fight for Doctor Who. And the end result is no Who, the casualty is creative television, the losers are the viewers.

The very structures which Birtism has put in to encourage 'choice', 'flexibility', 'accountability' are killing exactly the kind of 'distinctive' 'quality' television they are supposed to help foster.

Marc Gillham
Norway

As a Norwegian resident, my access to Doctor Who is decidedly limited. In fact, the only Who I've seen since the original transmission of season twenty six are four compilation films on a German channel of season 24. Interestingly enough, when dubbed in German, a language I do not understand, *Paradise Towers* came across as strangely compelling viewing. In fact, Richard Briers' portrayal of the Caretaker was quite chilling when the words "achtung, herr Doktor!" tumbled from his lips. This is undoubtedly due to the vocal talents of the German actors who provided the dialogue with real enthusiasm, but at least it shows that even some of the poorer stories of recent years got something right.

I have only just received news of the commissioning and subsequent cancelling of the 30th anniversary special, but I find it interesting to note that the entire saga only seemed to generate five letters of comment. I am just as guilty as the rest, but are people finally beginning to lose interest in the programme that only four years ago produced howls of outrage when it was cancelled? Perhaps this is an inevitable response to the prolonged absence of new Who from our screens. After all, the UK fans have hardly been deprived of Who-related material - books, videos, radio plays, soundtracks, repeat stories and so on. The accessibility of the programme and the level of merchandise available must be at its highest ever level.

I'm confident that Doctor Who will return to the small screen eventually. Market forces indicate that it could be inevitable. After all, the income of BBC Enterprises is surely going to suffer when there are no more stories to release on video (in about 6-7 years at current rates). But who wants to wait that long?

Neil Perry
Cleveland

It was nice while it lasted but the time has come to face up to the inevitable — Doctor Who is dead. The final nail in the coffin was unceremoniously hammered in on Friday 11th July by the faceless BBC Board of Management. After years of endless campaigning and speculation it is time to wake up and smell the coffee. The BBC have acted like an evil, selfish parent who have taken away our present from under the tree on Christmas Eve and no amount of anger or tears will bring it back. The time for the programme to return has come and gone in that we will never get a better opportunity than the 30th Anniversary. November 23rd 1993 was to have been a day of celebration and a beginning of a new era, instead it will be remembered as the day that never was.

By the time the 40th Anniversary rolls around DWB, DWM, DWAS and the rest will all be another piece of nostalgia. How long can a fan based network sustain itself with no new product to dissect and discuss? DWB cannot spend the next ten years arguing the classic status of *Tomb of the Cybermen*, DWM can only drag so many archives into print and interview so many people, the money grabbing BBC will have milked every last penny from the fans (they will have to release *The Horns of Nimon* one day), and UK Gold will have run out of repeats to screen. One day there will be nothing left but memories.

Alan Yentob has found an escape route that Jonathan Powell could only dream of (by mistake or otherwise). He tried to make our dream a reality and he got his fingers burnt in the process. Now he can hold his head up high and say that he gave it his best shot and can you all please now go away and leave him alone. What exactly is the point in petitioning the BBC any more? First we get Eldorado and now this debacle, what makes you think that anything will change? It's over. No amount of post mortems will change this sad fact, no witch hunts will result in a BBC U-turn. It will all merely create new false hopes to be stamped upon. I know when it's time to get out of this viscious circle, and that time is now.

Maybe one day the truth surrounding the events of 'Freaky Friday' will come to light. Maybe it was all the work of JNT and a conspiracy theory that Oliver Stone would be proud of; maybe it was Colin Baker's revenge against a corporation that betrayed and humiliated him and then had the audacity to ask him for his co-operation in such a project; maybe it was a cunning plan on behalf of Yentob and the BBC to shut the fans up once and for all; maybe the script was crap; maybe, maybe maybe.

This is all academic. This letter may sound defeatist, and even blasphemous to some fans, but I know when I am beaten. I know when it's time to move on. My attention has now turned to Star Trek-The Next Generation, not because it is a better show (it will never reach the dizzy heights or the painfully embarrassing lows of Doctor Who that gives the show it's uniqueness) but it has one thing going for it — new episodes. Along with Deep Space Nine, the approaching movies and even another off-shoot in the pipeline there is enough material old and new to keep my interest going for years to come. It cannot fully replace Doctor Who but let's face it - nothing else is going to either. Episodes as diverse as *The Best of Both Worlds, The Inner Light, Chain of Command II* and *Darmok* have done more than an entire season of Doctor Who could.

So I'm leaving for pastures new but Doctor Who will always remain part of my life. I have the videos, the books, the magazines and most importantly the memories. The one thing I won't miss is the desperation and frustration associated with it's return. "The end has come but the moment has been prepared for."

Ed: While you may be right about the 'purist' section of fandom, for a decent section of fandom (as a trip to the Tavern will show) Doctor Who has become the foundation for a far more wide-ranging ***television*** *fandom encompassing everything from classic radio and TV comedy through telefantasy, Morse and Holmes and sagas like Poldark and Secret Army. Just because you're widening your interests doesn't mean that you have to leave fandom (or Doctor Who) behind...*

QUATERMASS CUTS

Steve Roberts
London

In DWB117 you printed a letter from Stephen James Walker which suggested that the repeat of *Quatermass II* episode 3 during *The Lime Grove Story* was edited at the insistence of Nigel Kneale, as he thought it needed 'tightening up' for a modern day audience.

Although this may well be Mr Kneale's view, I am afraid that the edits were purely due to time constraints — the episode is 33 minutes long, but the alloted transmission slot was only 30 minutes. I was present at the edit, and I would like to point out that it was not undertaken lightly. All those involved felt very strongly that the episode should be transmitted intact, but the producer refused to allow the overrun. If my memory serves me, six edits were made, all of which were carefully selected to minimise loss of dialogue, although some loss was unavoidable.

However we did try to make up for this bit of butchery by showing the alternate take of the Doctor Who pilot, instead of the version released on BBC Video - that certainly didn't happen by accident.

DALEK ADDITIONS

Ronny Greenberg
Glasgow

Having read Diane McGinn's article in DWB 117 'Erosion of the Daleks', I felt that Ms McGinn missed one important point relating to the success of the Daleks.

Just as the 'man in a monster suit' idea became a cliche in the 1950s, so the Dalek imitations of other shows have become laughable. These were the original 'man in a pepper pot' monsters, and any other attempt to latch on to their success would fail not because the idea is poor, but because the Daleks were so successful they cannot be imitated.

Even when the design of a new alien is more lavish than that of the Daleks, whilst the designer can be seen to have used the Daleks as inspiration, his designs would be derided as unoriginal and 'Dalek' clones.

When the Daleks first appeared, there was nothing quite like them on British screens. They have now given rise to a whole new genre of cheap science fiction imitations. Their rich and logical history was only part of their success.

LEAKED!

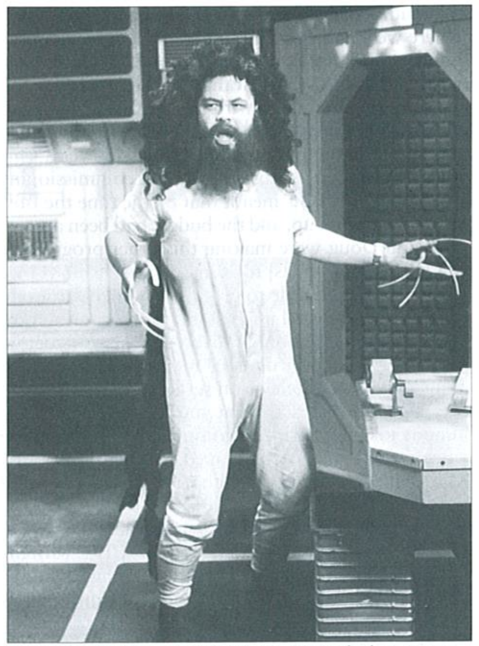
Gordon Barr
Renfrewshire

Nichelle Nichols' age may be a state secret, but it's not a very well hidden one. *The Star Trek Chronology* gives the actress an age of 27 at the time of the first season of the original series. With a little simple arithmetic it's easy to work out her age...

JUSTIN JUDD

RED DWARF VI PRODUCER

Having spent most of the morning watching the cast of Red Dwarf VI rehearsing with director Andy De Emmony, I had the pleasure of talking to the show's new producer — Justin Judd. Justin had been present for most of the rehearsal, but had spent most of the time quietly watching the proceedings, speaking to us only about certain aspects of the plot, set and dialogue. Hardly the stereotypical image of a television producer, Justin looked casual and relaxed, sporting a Red Dwarf leather jacket (rrp £90)...



Overslept & lost your spaceship? Lister (Craig Charles) - Psirens (© Mike Vaughn)

Justin, you've taken over the reins of producer for the sixth series of Red Dwarf?

Yes, this is my first series as producer, as last year's was produced by Hilary Bevan Jones, and previous series were produced by Ed Bye, who also directed. This is my first, and Andy De Emmony — who's directing — it's his first go as well.

Is this your first experience as a producer

No, I produced one thing with Rob [Grant] and Doug [Naylor], which was the The Ten Percenters pilot, for Carlton Television, and I have produced a series called Root into Europe which starred George Cole and was shown on ITV last year. I've produced lots of other bits and pieces — I've worked a lot with Ruby Wax, [and] that's sort of how I've come into contact with Rob and Doug, through Ed Bye, who's married to Ruby Wax.

Were you aware of Red Dwarf before you took on the job — had you ever watched it?

I used to watch it, but as is often the case when you work in television, you find you see very little, because you are either out working in the evening, or you find that you're sated by the end of the day, and you want to do something other than think about television. I'd obviously seen it, and was a fan, but I can't claim to have seen every episode at the time of the first transmission. I've seen all the other episodes, obviously, since then.

So what was your reaction when you were offered the job?

I was very excited. It is clearly one of the most challenging — from a production point of view — programmes to make. It is very successful, creatively, and original in its storylines and overall it's very funny. For somebody who likes producing comedy, it's an opportunity not to be missed. So I was thrilled to have been asked, and thrilled to be able to do it.

Did the programme's success worry you, in case you couldn't maintain the previous high standards?

Well, on a series like Red Dwarf, which has, over five previous series, established a format, then clearly what you can bring to it is not great originality. It's more a matter of maintaining a tradition, and that has its own challenge, and yes, I do get excited about that — but it's a different challenge, obviously from doing something new from scratch, like, say, the Henry Root series, which hadn't been done before. And if The Ten Percenters goes to a series, then that would be an interesting possibility. Not that that's relevant to Red Dwarf.

So what can a new producer bring to an established series like Red Dwarf?

With Red Dwarf, it's really a question of building on what has been achieved already — which is substantial — and in some ways it's very difficult to improve on. That's really it. There is an element with a series like Red Dwarf which is founded on the appeal of the technology — it is original. And to top it, each series has to be more original than the previous one. Rob and Doug's writing grows ever more ambitious, and the effects we're trying to achieve on a budget which isn't really significantly growing every year — for reasons of television economics — is a challenge in itself. But the driving force at all times remains Rob and Doug, and what they put down on paper is the important thing, and it's the producer's job to ensure that that is realised as faithfully as can be managed within the constraints. It does pose a formidable challenge because their imaginations are wide-ranging and boundless (almost).

For this series, the action isn't based on Red Dwarf, as in the previous five. That's a pretty radical departure - were you party to that decision?

I can't say why they [Rob and Doug] decided to do that other than it did two things — it was a radical departure and it opened up new possibilities. It is the challenge in a long-running series to come up with something new each series, and clearly that is a new angle. The other thing is that it makes Red Dwarf VI much more serial based, as opposed to six episodes existing in isolation. There is this through-line across the entire series, or serial as it's become, where there is this imperative for the crew to regain — catch up with — Red Dwarf.

So will this affect the running order of the episodes?

It does certainly mean that the first one, in which the revelation of Red Dwarf's disappearance is explained, has to be the first one transmitted. Normally they would take a decision as to what was transmitted first according to what they felt was the strongest episode. I'm not going to tell you whether or not they find Red Dwarf at the end of the series — you'll have to keep watching for that answer.

The series has a long history of continuity behind it, with the writers dealing with the characters' own histories and futures — is it a problem to adhere to this continuity, both visually and conceptually?

Clearly, the fact that the action is set mainly on Starbug has meant that we have had to make some changes to that. Viewers will know that each series has brought round changes in costume and looks to the set — the technology generally has improved — and that's never obviously been a problem. From a production point of view, obviously, we're keen to make it look glossier and more authentic than previously. I think the early series did look quite sit-comey and Rob and Doug had been insisting all the way down the line that they would try and get way from that traditional sit-com look and towards something that's more recognisable from films like *Aliens*, Star Trek and *Star Wars* — a dirty and more authentic look. In terms of your question, and the chronology of it, this series is more of a serial-based approach, and therefore the action in one episode will be referred to in another, and — to my knowledge — none of the action in this series makes very much reference to anything we might have seen before in previous series, so this is almost entirely self contained, and it doesn't really leap around. I think we get away with the changes we've made because of that self-contained nature.

As we speak, how many episodes are in the can?

We've done three — *Psirens*, *Call Me Legion* [sic] and *Rimmerworld* . We're currently shooting the fourth *Gunmen of the Apocalypse* [Full behind the scenes production report to appear in DWB soon] and we have one more script (*Polymorph II - Emohawk*). The last script is due for delivery in the next few days.

So you've still got no idea what is in the all-important last episode?

I have an idea but no-one else other than Rob and Doug do, and it's not been unknown for them to change their minds at the last minute. Very often you'll find that you have a great idea and you set out writing it, and then you find you just can't make it work so you abandon the idea and maybe come back to it at a much later point. But the urgency is actually having something on the table — you have to go into

Left: Cat (Danny John Jules), Kryten (Robert Llewellyn), Rimmer (Chris Barrie), Captain Tau (Anita Dobson) & Lister (Craig Charles - Psirens (© Oliver Upton) the studio with an entirely different idea — that's where we stand at the moment.

I understand that the scripts for this series have been written in more of a rush than usual?

This is my first time with the series [so] I can't obviously comment on how they've been delivered in the past. There are reasons for that this year. One main reason is because of a late commissioning decision by the BBC meant that by the time the BBC made their mind up, and the budget had been agreed, Rob and Doug were making this other programme [THE TEN PERCENTERS] for Carlton Television [ITV], and they weren't able to give their immediate attention to RED DWARF. I understand that for series four, the last episode was only delivered in the week before recording. It's never unusual for this series, nor is it unusual for other television series. The only effect it has is it really restricts what you can do, because the time it takes to set up a complicated episode with effects and a large cast is denied you, simply because you don't have time to do that. Necessity says that whatever episode we record last goes out last, and will be even more contained within Starbug.

There have been recent changes at the BBC, with the departure of Jonathan Powell and Alan Yentob's move to BBC1, and BBC2 has no real Controller at the moment [sic]. Has that affected RED DWARF in any way?

It hasn't, no. Current commissioning supremo at BBC2 is Janet Street-Porter, who is in charge of BBC North which is based in Manchester, where her Youth and Entertainment Features [Department] is based. She remains currently in charge there, and gives us that continuity. It is not inconceivable that within a week-or-so [sic] she may be promoted to Controller of BBC2 — I understand that she's a favourite candidate so I can't predict what that will do for RED DWARF, but one would hope that as we are one of her pet projects, we would find favour in her office. [Michael Jackson was eventually appointed ahead of Street Porter.]

So, no plans for RED DWARF VII yet?

I think every year the exhaustion mounts over the production of the series — everyone thinks "We can't go through this again", but of course with a series that's as popular as this — with the ideas that Rob and Doug are generating — after an appropriate period of rest the feasibility, possibility and desirability of a further series just re-asserts itself. Certainly as long as they've got the ideas to write, then I foresee there will be another series of RED DWARF.

And would you like to be Producer?

Certainly, based on the experience of RED DWARF VI, I would like to continue my involvement, yes. Who knows whether or not they would have me back!!

Do you have any plans for future projects?

Yes, I do, but superstition prevents me from saying what they are, other from saying my experience is that you have to have two or three projects as possible, in the hope that one of them might possibly come off. As things stand, I have possibilities, but nothing confirmed — it's a slightly scary life being a freelance producer!

To what do you attribute RED DWARF's popularity?

The writing and performances are consistent over the five previous years, and again in this sixth year. It always come down to the originality of the scripts, and the interpretation of them by the cast. A lot of the people put in an enormous amount of dedication — Visual Effects must get a special mention there…

The last series won an award for its effects, didn't it?

They won the Royal Television Society Award for Visual Effects, deservedly so. Peter Wragg has a very devoted team — he's a BBC Employee — very devoted to him and the production, and they work wonders on a miniscule budget. But not just Peter — Mel Bibby gets a mention for his extraordinary sets, again on a shoestring, which look ever more authentic and realistic, as you will have seen for yourself. It is a team effort, but the inspiration for the team comes from Rob and Doug, and to them must go the lion's share of the credit.

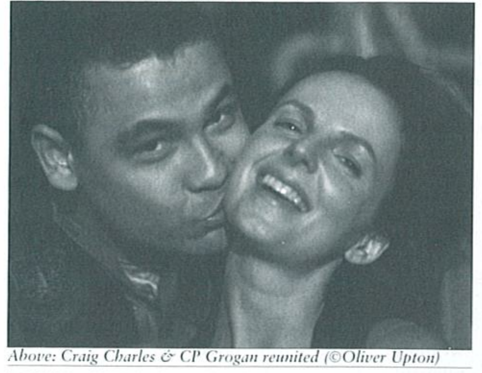
Justin Judd, thank you very much.

It's a pleasure.

Interview conducted by **Richard Molesworth** on Friday March 12th. With thanks to Justin Judd, Kate Cotton, Rachel Carter and Darren Field.

LOST: One Spaceship, five miles long, colour red…

WARNING: THIS ARTICLE REVEALS SOME PLOT DETAILS



Above: Craig Charles & CP Grogan reunited (©Oliver Upton)

Professor Mamet (Jenny Agutter) - Psirens (©Mike Vaughn)

THE SIXTH SEASON of RED DWARF kicks off on Thursday **7th October** at 9.00pm on BBC2 with *Psirens*. Lister awakes from 200 years of suspended animation to find himself on Starbug, in pursuit of Red Dwarf - has it been stolen by persons or creatures unknown or did he just forget where he parked it? Also on Starbug are the rest of the crew — Rimmer, Cat and Kryten — who also have to come to terms with the loss of their mothership. In order to catch up with Red Dwarf, they have to navigate through an asteroid belt that contains swarms of deadly creatures who lure space-farers with a lethal combination of telepathic manipulation and scanty clothing — Psirens! Look out for brief cameo appearances by Anita Dobson as the laser-totting Captain Tau, the delightful Jenny Agutter as Professor Mamet — Kryten's creator — and the long-awaited return of C P Grogan as Kochanski. Things are not always as they seem, however…

Tau (Anita Dobson) & Kochanski (CP Grogan) ©Oliver Upton

Things to watch for: Starbug's impact with an asteroid, Pete Tranter's sister, Kryten's re-booting of Rimmer and "Smug-mode".

14th October brings us *Legion.* Starbug is plucked from its course by a powerful tractor beam, and docks with a seemingly disused space station. The crew emerge to forage for supplies, and encounter the station's lone occupant — Legion. Legion uses his impressive genius and powers to alter Rimmer's light-bee to emit hard-light drive, allowing the hologram to touch and feel, and manages to impress the crew of Red Dwarf enough for them to offer him the opportunity of joining them. But what is Legion's dark secret?

Things to watch for: Starbug's capture, Legion's light switch and the meal…

Above: Legion shows Lister (Craig Charles) his room (©Mike Vaughn)

On **October 21st** we have *Gunmen of the Apocalypse*. Straying into a Rogue Simulant hunting zone, the crew of Starbug find themselves attacked and then crippled by a deadly computer virus which forces Kryten into a dreamscape battle within a wild west town. The Apocalypse boys come a'gunning for sheriff Kryten — can the others save him in time before Starbug collides with something big and nasty, and what significance does a dove motif hold to their predicament? Dennis Lill puts in a terrific performance in his dual roles in this story.

Things to watch for: The Great Vindalooian Empire, the "Gumshoe" game and the molten planet.

Dennis Lill as the Simulant - Gunmen… (©Oliver Upton)

28th October is the date for *Emohawk — Polymorph II*. Whilst escaping from a Jupiter Mining Corporation Security Probe, Starbug crashes on a planet in the hostile GELF zone. When the crew attempt to bargain with the GELFs for equipment they need to repair their ship, Lister finds himself in a situation he had only envisaged for himself and Kochanski. This starts a series of events that sees them pitted against the deadly Emohawk — a member of the Polymorph species — and also sees the return of Duane Dibley (*Back to Reality*) and Ace Rimmer.

Things to watch for: Steve Wickham (DWAS Coordinator) and Duane Dibley's thermos flask.

Rimmerworld - Chris Barrie as Rimmer (©Nobby Clark)

They're back! Kryten, Lister, Duane Dibbley and the incredible Ace Rimmer : Emohawk — Polymorph II (©Nobby Clark)

On **4th November** is *Rimmerworld*. Rimmer discovers that being a hologram — even a solid one — is not without its health problems. A bizarre series of events leaves Rimmer stranded on a barren planet 800 years away from the rest of the crew, with only a crashed escape pod and a planet-seeding terraforming kit. When his attempts at reproduction go slightly astray, the crew of Starbug, once they catch up with him, find themselves on a planet whose population consists entirely of Rimmers — even the women…

Things to watch for: Rimmer's Balls and the Simulant ship explosion.

11th November brings us the final episode of the series — *Out of Time*. The crew of Starbug come across a fully-working time machine, which when fitted to Starbug will hopefully help their recovery of Red Dwarf. Things don't work out as expected, and before long Starbug finds itself being hailed by… Starbug, fifteen years into the future! The crew have to decide if it is worth finding out about their own futures or living on in blissful ignorance. After all, curiosity killed the Cat…

Things to watch for: The dreadlocks on the jar (?) and the crew losing their heads.

Will our heroes find Red Dwarf? Will Rimmer stop cowering in everyone's shadow and finally stand up to fight for himself and his friends? How will the Cat's nose help the situation? Does Kryten like dice games? Will Lister get his first leg-over in three million years? Will Holly return? Will there be a RED DWARF VII? Come 9.30pm on November 11th, you'll be crying out for the next series…

With the fifth season of RED DWARF pulling in average audiences of around 6.5 million, it will be interesting to see if the antics of Dave Lister & Co still have the pulling power expected of them.

Although this is the transmission order at the time of going to press, supplied by Grant Naylor productions, *Gunmen, Emohawk* and *Rimmerworld* may swap around in the running order. At one point it looked as though a seventh episode — a 50-minute Christmas special — might also have been made, although this has not proved possible. A seventh season has not yet been commissioned, with no decision due until the new year at latest.

Rachel Carter

Above: Out of Time - Kryten meets the crew's future selves… (©Oliver Upton)

Perhaps the most popular TARDIS crew ever, back on TV thanks to UK Gold, in a rare publicity shot

Acton, London, 1974 © Hulton Deutsch

The Trial of...

THE TRIAL OF A TIME LORD

IF VIEWED as a rehearsal for what might happen if Doctor Who is ever permitted to return from the outer darkness of its second and much longer "hiatus", *Trial of a Time Lord* is certainly cause for concern. After a tremendous build-up of anticipation, fuelled in part by the idea that Robert Holmes had worked out a grandly interconnected season unlike any seen before, it was mostly downhill after a giddy opening sequence which promised unprecedented effects for a Doctor Who budget.

The first portent of rough times was the revised theme, which seemed to have been rearranged for kazoo and wash-tub bass. The second was the brevity of the New Look for Doctor Who. As soon as the TARDIS landed inside the giant Whatever in Space, Colin Baker stepped out into a set which seemed entirely constructed of Lego blocks and orange crates. For the next 14 episodes it frequently appeared that most of the money and a good deal of the ingenuity for the season was expended on the opening 15 seconds.

Of course, the public was not aware of the unhappiness that was festering between the script editor and the producer, nor that this would be the swan song for Baker's Doctor, fated to be axed after only two seasons without a proper farewell and regeneration scene. Given this Doctor's propensity for violence and the actor's leanings towards excess, one can only imagine what might have been appropriate but something involving lots of explosions and a dismembered Cybermen or two sounds likely.

If these background dramas are held at bay long enough to actually look at the components of *Trial* shorn of the high hopes encouraged by ardent publicity work, the season is actually quite a progressive one for Colin Baker and, while she lasted, Nicola Bryant. The great losers were the Time Lords themselves, who slide so far from any pedestal they might once have occupied in the eyes of fans as to be unsalvageable.

Baker managed to breathe some warmth into 'Doctor Wholigan' though he remained more convincing when playing the Doctor as gone rogue than as uncynical hero. Even his outbursts against the Valeyard are relatively restrained as compared to the previous season. The softening of his Doctor's sharp edges is aided immensely by the improvements in the writing and playing of his companion mark one, Peri, whose constant whining and nasal intonation the previous season had set teeth on edge throughout fandom and made the Doctor's cool and biting attitude towards her every comment entirely believable. Where once these two did not have conversations so much as wrestling matches, humour and affection were now allowed to seep in — making it believable in time that the Doctor would be much affected by the death he saw in the Matrix.

Of course, this character development was all for naught as Peri was gone, if not by way of brain pillage then via the least plausible romance since Leela suddenly decided that inept Andred was her man. On came Mel and the rest is history, bound to repeat itself in this year's survey of least popular companions, unless the detractors of Adric mount a furious late charge. At least with Mel one could almost sympathise with the Doctor, who frequently became the tormented instead of the tormentor.

No, the chief detriments to *Trial of a Time Lord* were the foolish attempt to string all the episodes together in the framework of the trial, and the complete dismantling of any remaining shred of integrity left to the Time Lords, this time implicating the Doctor himself in their corruption with the distillation of his dark side in the implausible person of the Valeyard. Of course, there was not a great deal left to dismantle after *The Invasion of Time* and *The Five Doctors*, the former making the Time Lords seem bumbling and foolish while the latter made it appear that even the greatest of them were incapable of resisting the corruptions of power. If Borusa could be transformed from Obi Wan to just another Master, who could not? And in *Trial* the Doctor himself appears just as capable of this shift, or at least capable of producing an evil twin for the High Council to bargain with.

Purists would no doubt have preferred that the Doctor's home world and his mysterious superiors remain mysterious, but it was the revered Holmes himself who largely charted the demythologising of the Time Lords (beginning in the Pertwee era) in a mould dictated by his trademark mistrust of authority and power, whether economic or political. That much of this was very entertaining should not disguise the impact. By the end of *Trial*, Glitz seems fully qualified to sit on the High Council if he will just learn to make his crimes bigger. The Doctor's reaction to learning about the Time Lord interventions on Thoros Beta and Ravalox is entirely too true — that he would have accomplished more good by staying at home and fighting this "sanctimonious bunch of hypocrites." But if the oldest and most advanced civilisation in the universe is "degenerate to the core." what could he achieve on Gallifrey but a temporary halt to high-handed covert operations?

Kathleen Toth

The Good, the Bad and the Sabalom Glitz

IT IS SAID, not least by the New Adventures guidelines, that if you're finding it easy to write a novel then you're doing it wrong. Well, I agree it isn't easy, but have to add that reviewing *The Mysterious Planet* is currently rather more difficult than producing a novel. The reason being, to my shame, that I foolhardily agreed to find some plus points to this entry in the *Trial* season... How does one start to review a part of *The Trial Of A Time Lord*? As a whole it brings to mind the thought of seeing Richard IV in *Mindwarp*, or hearing the Peter Lorre impressions of a bunch of rejects from *The Great Vegetable Rebellion*. *Trial* was behind-the-sofa viewing all right, because you hid behind the sofa to avoid anyone catching you actually watching it. But wait...was it all at the bottom of the barrel? I seem to recall it going downhill, which means the first story must have been...watchable? Surely not? Well, yes actually, *Mysterious Planet* is watchable, for the most part. Like the rest of the season, it has its problems, but I actually do have a sort of abashed liking for — certain elements of — it, which I'd like to explain a bit.

The Valeyard – a villain of such dubious quality that he's actually banned from The New Adventures — here attempts to show us that the Doctor is not as cuddly as he makes out. The thought occurs that if someone had slipped him a copy of *Warhead* or *Love and War*, the Doctor would have been lynched on the spot. Instead, one might be forgiven for assuming he has inadvertently tuned in to a sort of Sergio Leone version of Maid Marion and her Merry Men. As you might gather from the above title, I'm something of a spaghetti western fan. This might seem irrelevant, until you look at typical spaghetti western plot elements. An example might go something like this: In the midst of what is otherwise a wasteland, a mysterious stranger turns up to inveigle himself with the local inhabitants, of whom there are two groups. First assisting one group, then provoking their ire, he goes to the other group, and falls foul of them. Our mysterious stranger then makes sure that the two groups will deal with each other, so that he can polish off the surviving leader, and leave the other survivors to rebuild their shell-shocked lives. Does all that sound familiar?

This is not to say that *The Mysterious Planet* is Robert Holmes' tribute to the spaghetti western, but the elements are certainly there, and it is doubtful that he was unaware of the genre. The biggest link to spaghetti westerns, however, comes, not in the form of the Doctor, but of Sabalom Glitz.

Glitz, in this story, is Holmes' last great creation; a three-dimensional rogue who is unmistakably a direct descendant of Tuco, the Eli Wallach character in *The Good, The Bad And The Ugly*. Like Tuco, Glitz is an unkempt bandit who is both over the top and thoroughly believable. The thing that strikes the viewer most of all — especially with hindsight after two stories in which the character has degenerated into a sort of East-end version of Harcourt Fenton Mudd — is the artful way in which the skills of writer Holmes and actor Tony Selby combine to produce a character who can be the comic relief one moment and the most threatening villain the next, without losing a single iota of credibility. He is, as it happens, one of the few Who villains — if such he truly is — to be given reasonable exposition as to his past history, making him much more three-dimensional. Glitz also, naturally for a Holmes script, has a partner to complete the requisite double-act; in this case the redoubtable Dibber, a somewhat cliched character in the Rodney Trotter mould, ably played by Glen Murphy, later to gain fame on London's Burning. Together, this pair of reprobate escapees from Minder manage to steal all the scenes they appear in, and also get away with all the best lines — the 'black light' gag being a memorable example, though Glitz's comment that thinking too much will give Dibber a hernia is another gem. Indeed, a case could be made for stating that the casting of Glitz and Dibber was one instance where JNT's Light Entertainment type of casting policy was inadvertently successful.

This was just a minor blip on that particular record, and brings us neatly to the other main guest star, and the reason for comparing the story to Tony Robinson's eponymous children's series mentioned above. No, it doesn't have Forbes Collins in it again, thank God, but we are stuck with *Carry On* star Joan Sims in the most cliched 'barbarian queen' role this side of Sandahl Bergman in *Red Sonja*. The problem here is, as usual, one of extreme overacting in what must be described (despite Colin Baker and Tony Selby's protestations) as pantomime. To be fair, for the first half of the story she's not too bad, implying that Katryca is a somewhat wearied matriarch under a burden of unwanted responsibility. After that, however, it's mega-decibel shouting and contorted facial expressions all the way. Let me put it this way, it makes Miranda Richardson's Queen Elizabeth in *Blackadder II* look positively subdued. The red fright wig — surely not 'James Stoker's' cast-off from *The King's Demons?* — doesn't help a bit. Even her death scream when electrocuted (or so I assume from the flickery video effect) by Drathro is extremely forced and hammy. Bearing in mind that Maggie Thatcher was at the height of her powers, then perhaps this screeching harridan with no common sense opposing an impersonal but pretentious speechmaker was deliberate after all... As for the rest of the villagers, well, they're a pretty faceless bunch at best, with no memorable qualities whatsoever except for the fact that there are so few of them — usually about half a dozen in any given crowd scene.

However, I'm digressing; I said I'd say some good things about this story, and so I will. The first thing of note is that Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant have now settled into their roles, and actually seem to be friends, which makes much more sense if they're to be travelling together. More importantly, the acting on the part of both is rather more restrained and believable than in the previous season, with the Doctor mercifully less blustering and Peri no longer quite the whiner she was before. Indeed, the pair seem so relaxed and confident that it almost seems that the series' fortunes were about take a turn for the better, with Colin now truly the Doctor — complete with duty to help the underdogs — and no longer an arrogant clown who blunders into increasingly daft situations. Holmes gave the sixth Doctor some of his best material, particularly with regard to his relationship with the uncertain Merdeen.

Speaking of Merdeen, he's another excellent character, and played by the one really good actor in the production — Tom Chadbon (and completely different from Duggan!). Merdeen is the leader of Drathro's guards. Chadbon is one of the best actors in the season, and in Who in general, so it's a shame he's appearing here in a story in which his beautifully understated performance is guaranteed to be 100% upstaged by Tony Selby. Nevertheless, he manages to make Holmes' character come to life, and to be much more than the usual guard captain that frequents the series. (Compare him to Colin's performance in the upcoming release of *Arc Of Infinity* and you'll see what I mean!).

Finally, there is Drathro himself. Apart from his aforementioned pretension and typically anthropomorphic form, Drathro is indeed an impressive creation, with convincingly unhuman hand and arm movements. On the other hand his dull silvery body and doom-laden delivery when talking about the end of his experiment also conspire to make him come over as a sort of Schwarzenegger version of Marvin the Paranoid Android. This is not, however, necessarily a bad thing — at least it's fairly original, which is more than can be said for his Cyber-voice...

However, bad actors may ruin a good story, but good actors rarely rescue a bad story, so how does the actual plot of *Mysterious Planet* hold up? Well, not too well, I'm afraid, but not too badly either. The simple fact is that it is precisely average for Doctor Who overall. The storyline is not exactly original, despite Holmes' skill, containing much running up and down corridors, being tied up, escaping, being recaptured, etc. There is some nice location shooting with realistic wattle huts (not specifically built for the show) and some good shots of the characters wandering amongst the trees. Dominic Glynn's incidental music, though not yet reaching the brilliance of the score for the otherwise risible Happiness Patrol, is quite good — though not as different from the style of the previous season's music as he and the production team liked to make out. The sub-plot about the Earth having been moved is very underplayed, but science is right out the window on that score — and why does the Valeyard refer to it as being 'within the Stellian galaxy,' when it has only been moved by a couple of light years (in which case how is it so light, since that's only half way to Centauri?). Gallifrey is in our galaxy, remember, and don't the Time Lords already have enough silly names for that? But that's enough of that — fandom 'knows' that *Trial* is appalling, right? So, we've had the good, and Glitz, which leaves the bad...

As usual in eighties stories, the biggest problems are on the production side, with two major problems in particular. The first major problem is with the sets of Marb Station. As with so many eighties stories, they are far too brightly lit, showing off their sticky-backed plastic nature in all their glory. It doesn't help that the joins between the walls and floor, and occasionally different wall sections, are plainly visible, while the few lengths of corridor that were constructed from common sections were all too obvious redresses of each other; the direction being so static — the phrase rigour mortis springs immediately to mind — that it seems as if the crew want the viewer to know that it's the same set shot from different sides. There are no *Four To Doomsday*-style cleverly interlocking segments that can be infinitely (and convincingly) altered here. It doesn't help that, as specified by Holmes, the train guards have helmet lights — one would think that this would be a subtle hint that the tunnels were supposed to be dim and dingy... On the plus side, the ruined Underground set is actually quite good — though since the story is set two billion years in the future, I have to wonder at the fact that the Marble Arch sign is perfectly legible.

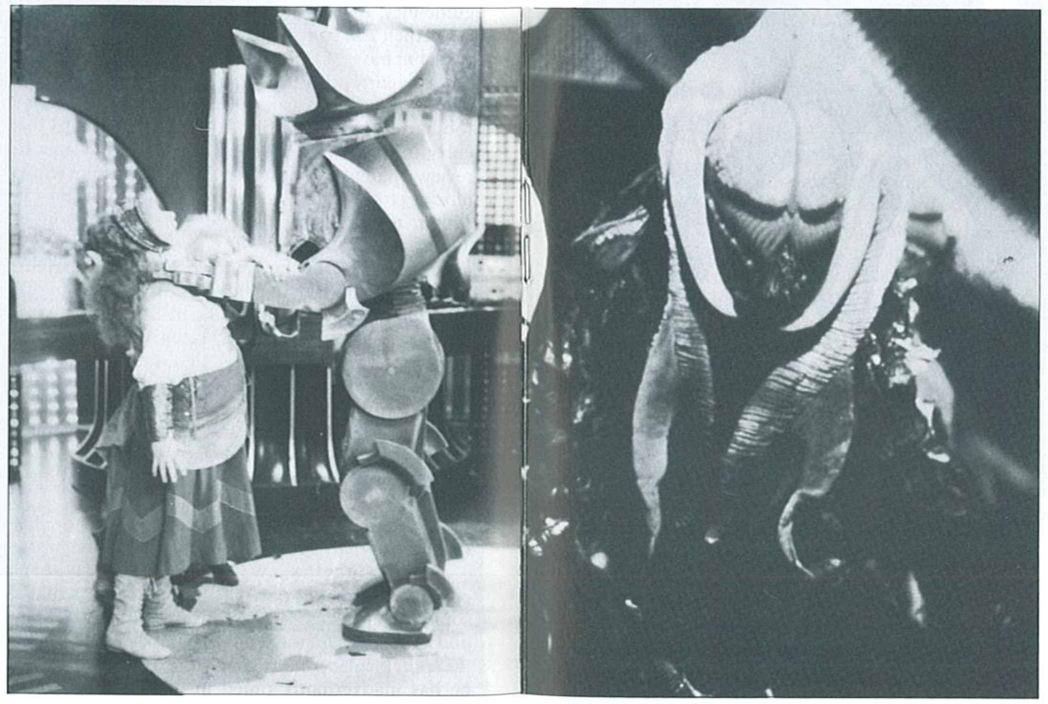
For the second major problem, I must mention the food chamber. (Must I? Oh, I suppose I must...) Whoever had the idea — I can't believe for an instant that it was Holmes — that covering some supporting actors in green slime was a suitable climax for an SF adventure/drama serial should have their *!£"@£$*! "$*" (censored!) !!*@ and the wounds cleaned with vinegar. This scene has all the hallmarks of either the Downie/JNT team's insipid excuse for Whitehouse-pleasing humour, or Eric Saward's sub-sub-sub-Holmesian attempts at wit (and Whitehouse-pleasing humour.) Don't get me wrong, Saward was a fine writer, but as a script editor there was something to be desired. It seems to have occurred to no-one that, while humour does have an important place in Who, it works best as a sort of self-effacing wit. This is why *Horns of Nimon* is brilliantly funny despite being crap, and *Twin Dilemma* would have more chance of raising the dead than raising a laugh. Likewise, the slime scene in *Mysterious Planet* is about as funny as the average funeral, and as misplaced as a Coke machine in a dentist's waiting room.

Those are just the major problems. If you also take into account the fact that most of the hardware hails from previous shows (such as the *Earthshock* helmets), the flat direction, the painfully obvious backwards scene when the L1 (with Janet Ellis' father inside) captures the Doctor, the Doctor's ludicrous line at the end of part two, and the shortest escalator in history, then you might begin to worry about the rest of the season when I repeat that this is the best story of the set!

Actually, in all fairness, *Mysterious Planet* is precisely average, as I'd said before, but is dragged down by the rest of the season, and the linking trial scenes. Were it made under an earlier regime, it would never have been a classic, but would have been considered an everyday story like so many others. As far as being a Holmes story is concerned, *Mysterious Planet* is very much a first draft Homes story, and one suspects that had Holmes not been afflicted with an ultimately fatal illness, then *Mysterious Planet* would have been far superior. As his last Who story, *Mysterious Planet* is not the best of endings.

In terms of the video release, yes, *Mysterious Planet* would be worth getting if the stories were available separately. As it is, with the rest of the season in the same box, it is perhaps not such a bargain. I still urge you to keep an open mind if you do buy the set, however, and I shall stick to my claim that *Mysterious Planet* is not as bad as you might expect, and if you think *Trial*'s bad, just remember that they've released all the regeneration stories with one notable exception — how long before they inflict *Time And The Rani* on us? As for a rating? Hmm... I think precisely a middling (5).

David McIntee



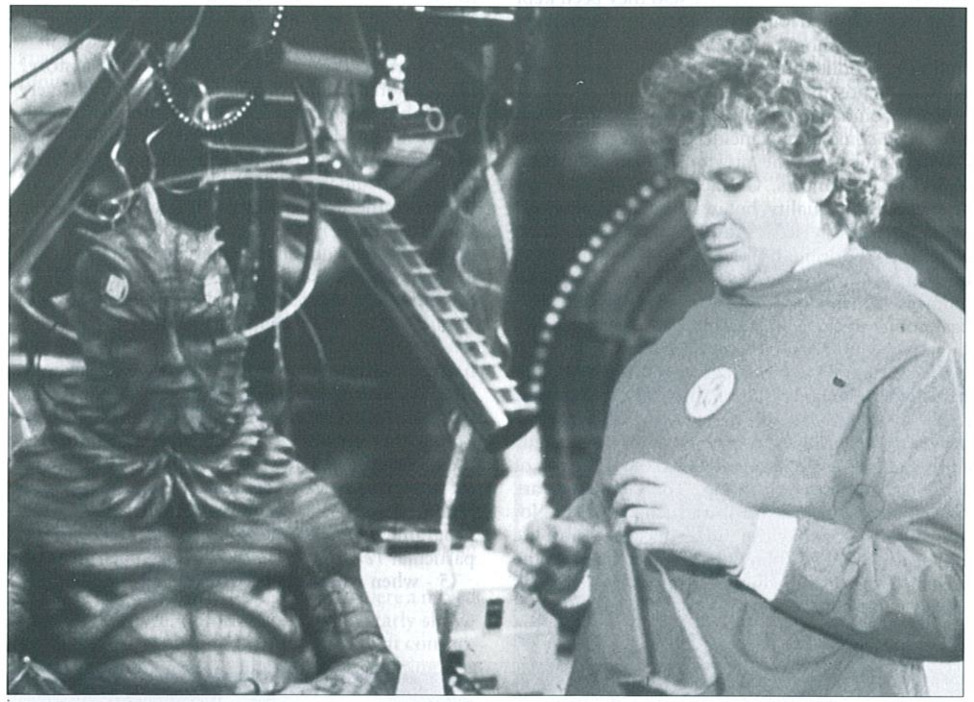
Slugs and Snails and Lukoser Tales

WHILE *MINDWARP* is often regarded as the weakest of the three flashbacks making up the bulk of the season, this is only because it is the one which cannot stand apart from the trial structure — which, after all, was supposed to be the motif for the season. *Mysterious Planet* and *Terror of the Vervoids* are standard Doctor Who adventures, and the first of these is pretty boring at that. As the Doctor tells the Valeyard, if the rest of the presentation is as riveting as this first little epic, "wake me when its over." It is at least possible to stay awake during *Mindwarp*, if only because the Doctor's changes of side and mood are so outrageous.

Considering that it was directed by a man damned as 'bland' as often as Ron Jones, *Mindwarp* is astonishingly atmospheric. Much of this must be put down to Richard Hartley's superb score, which consistently sends tingles of expectation down the spine at just the moment they were needed. If JNT had an ounce of taste he'd've hired him to revamp the theme the following year (giving him the benefit of the doubt, Hartley might just have been too expensive or something, but it's a great pity he never returned). But there are still some impressive directorial flourishes, from the matte effect long shots, to the double-flash of the strobe lighting just as it appears Yrcanos might have fired at the end of part two(/six). Jones is the only director this season who manages to create any sense of building tension.

The paintbox pink sea may not have been terribly convincing, nor was the Rarrk, but the story picks up considerably once Brian Blessed — dressed as a cosmic samurai — arrives and begins to chew the scenery with relish. Over the top? Well yes, but never to the point where the character becomes unbelievable. That's simply what Yrcanos is like, and Peri's attempts to keep up with him are consistently entertaining. It is the only memorable performance in the non-trial sequences of the season, save for Tony Selby as Glitz — a character which is a mere shadow of Holmes' earlier creations.

King Yrcanos and his dog-like servant at least have a clear sense of moral priorities generally lacking in the rest of the story. His faith that there must be a resistance somewhere to the tyranny of the Mentors and that they will find him is more touching than amusing (Though it's unfortunate that this resistance consists of Gordon Warnecke delivering cliched lines with a resigned disinterest of which such a usually reliable actor should be ashamed. A poor contrast to Trevor Laird, who brings an unusually realistic air to the under-written role of Guard Captain Frax). He and Crozier are the only people on Thoros Beta who are prepared to die for ideals. Crozier is so committed to completing his research on brain transplants that he repeatedly risks death from the Mentors to continue his experiments.



Trial of a Time Lord photos © BBC Video

If Crozier partakes a bit too much of the standard mad scientist syndrome, at least he does not bore us with talk of the vast power, wealth, or what have you that his work will gain for him. He is also refreshingly down to earth on occasion, stopping to finish his tea before attending to Kiv! Nabil Shaban's Sil seems more a comic figure in this assembly then he had been the previous season but that is partly because he must play the role of subordinate to Kiv, the grand Nagus (!) of all commercial enterprise among the Mentors of Thoros Beta. Sil and Kiv are quite convincing as giant slugs and the apparent climax with Peri now inhabited by Kiv's mind is quite memorable if not "real."

And there is Colin Baker, playing all too convincingly a Doctor willing to change sides to save his own life. Of course, this is accompanied by the Doctor's court-room protestations that this behaviour must be a clever ploy, even if he can't quite remember what happened. At least with this Doctor it is possible to have some doubt as to what is actually happening.

Mindwarp injects what mystery there is into the whole *Trial* scenario by casting doubt on the Doctor's character and establishing the death of his companion — made the more believable by memories of Adric and the fact that the Time Lords snatched the Doctor from Thoros Beta prior to the resolution of Peri's plight, providing *The Trial* with one its few genuinely chilling moments in the process. From the start, the mystery surrounding Peri's fate hangs over *Mindwarp* (as it should have done right from the moment that the Doctor stumbled alone from the TARDIS), with the penultimate episode ending providing an impressive red herring before the Time Lords' intervention finally strikes just when it was least expected. It also leaves us with the conclusion that Yrcanos needs to make a visit to Gallifrey to do some house cleaning, but the situation there seems beyond redemption. (7)

Kathleen Toth & Anthony Brown

The Vegetarian's Nightmare

WHEN IT was originally broadcast I found *Terror of the Vervoids* to be the first story ever to make me embarrassed to admit to being a fan of Doctor Who. Quite simply I hated it, found the attempt to create a murder mystery in space laughable and saw it as the worst section of *The Trial of a Time Lord*. Seven years later, it's time to dust off the video cassette to see whether I still hate it or whether, to coin a phrase, the memory has cheated.

What always irritated me about *Vervoids* is that the "evidence" is based upon future events. At the time of the story's broadcast I viewed this as undermining the whole concept of the season, for if the Doctor's future can be examined then clearly he survived the events of the trial. Now obviously it could be said that the Doctor has been looking into a different time stream to that in which the trial is taking place, but even so, such a "leap" was confusing and appeared to make little sense both to fans and casual viewers (if indeed there were any casual viewers left by this point) alike.

The build up to the story made great play upon the themes of "murder, mystery and suspense." Well the story certainly contains murder, and mystery, but there's precious little of the final element. Pip and Jane Baker were quoted as having always wanted to do an "Agatha Christie in Space" and that fans could expect a story akin to *The Robots of Death*. Making direct comparisons to past classics is always a risky business, and suggests that the story cannot stand up on its own. My suspicions that *Vervoids* would indeed fall "somewhat short" of classic status were soon to be confirmed.

The basic fault, apart from the lack-lustre script, is the general lack of imagination and subtlety in the production. The sets are bland, and give the main lounge of the ship an appearance more akin to a garden centre cafeteria than that of a futuristic space cruiser. Deep Space Nine's Promenade it ain't!! The CS0 is pretty dreadful with blue fringes prominent, and the shots of the ship only highlight the superior nature of motion control photography. Simply to use CSO to realise the ship's exterior is the cheap option, and this cheapness shows itself only too clearly on screen. Likewise the flight deck appears supremely unimaginative, being only one step up from Blake's 7's London. The best sets, to be honest, are the corridors (surely a supreme irony in a Doctor Who story!) and the cabins, which accurately mirror the cramped conditions of a cheap hotel or bargain basement ferry. But this accuracy is based around late twentieth century design. One would have thought that for the far future something a little different would have been created. Instead the designer was on auto-pilot and produced ineffective designs that owe their roots to "popular perceptions" of "Sci-Fi" rather than inspiration and originality. Now I can appreciate that the budget was tight and that time was short (especially considering the chaos that was going on behind the camera) but all in all the visuals of *Vervoids* are decidedly second grade, never threatening to make the viewer sit up and marvel. More to the point they do not inspire the willing suspension of disbelief which is at the heart of all telefantasy.

Episode one begins with the by now standard trial scenes which after eight episodes were becoming a little tiresome to say the least. It must be said however that in the initial scene Colin Baker plays a Doctor clearly stricken with grief at the death of Peri, and thus this does not degenerate into the usual Doctor/Valeyard slanging match. But what of the main murder mystery plot? Well episode one does try to create something of an atmosphere of mystery and suspense. We are introduced to the passengers on board the ship and the various motives that drive their characters are revealed. For example, when Grenville is identified as Hallet by the "sweet old man" attention is drawn to the reactions of Professor Lasky's team — clearly they have something to hide but what? Hallet's later movements seem to point the finger in the direction of the hydroponic centre and some mysterious pods, about which little is known.

Establishing the situation is vital to producing good drama, and on paper *Vervoids* looks okay, but the execution with its "A-Z of cliches" falls flat on its face. Chris Clough attempts to build tension by stock shots of reaching hands, shadowy glimpses and people being watched. These conventions worked in *The Robots of Death* but fail and fail badly in *Vervoids*. The crew of the sandminer were all defined individuals and the "community" was well rounded and believable. But nine years later when *Vervoids* attempts something similar it just doesn't work. Quite simply, we do not care about the crew and passengers of the Hyperion III, there is no anger produced in the viewer as each character is despatched, and if we don't care then it doesn't matter who is doing the killing. As such, the vital elements of a murder mystery are unravelled and rather than becoming enthralled, the viewer becomes all too easily bored.

The episode's ending however is quite dramatic leaving one to hope that the remainder of the story will be more promising. Indeed we gradually learn more about Lasky and her work and are prompted to wonder on more than one occasion as to what lies behind the door of the isolation room. But when the "infected" technician is revealed at the end of the episode her purpose is at an end, and one is left feeling that the script could easily have survived without her. This seems to be a major fault of the script, which has little to say and as such is padded out with individual set pieces which add little or nothing to the main narrative and simply amplify the shortcomings of Pip and Jane Baker's writing. For example we have the elaborate scene in which one of the Mogarians is killed and the Doctor reveals that he is in fact a human, who turns out to be Hallet. This scene serves no real purpose, and the trial sequences in which the Doctor shows how he knew the Mogarian to be an imposter is similarly redundant. *Vervoids* could really have been a two or three parter, and would have benefited greatly from the pruning.

Such a horticultural reference leads nicely onto the Vervoids themselves. On the whole they are reasonably executed (though their dialogue demonstrates the Bakers' utter inability to create a remotely credible alien culture). The masks are excellent and rank alongside the best produced in the history of the show. But they are let down by the bodies. They would have been more effective had they been kept in the shadows for a longer period of time but having spent a large amount of money making them no doubt the production team wanted to feature them as much as possible.

What would also have benefited the story would have been some decent incidental music. Malcolm Clarke shows why the previous stories had been scored by freelancers. Clarke's music has always been variable in quality, but in *Vervoids* he plumbed the depths. Many scenes are practically silent and sorely miss the dramatic effect of well written music. Unfortunately all we get are a series of stings and fanfares which supposedly emphasise dramatic flashpoints in the script. The lack of music makes some scenes unbearably quiet and only draws the viewers' attention to the dialogue, which in a Holmes script would be no bad thing, but in a Pip and Jane Baker script??? True, we had yet to experience the catharsis of spurious verbosity which was to plague episode 14, but for sheer banality the dialogue of *Vervoids* takes some beating. The characters are continually stating the obvious, such as Mel's "Nobody sends a Mayday call unless it's a matter of life and death!" whilst Colin Baker hams it up from the start as he delivers the line "Can't you sense it Mel, there's evil!!" All we need is a cut away shot to a shadowy corridor and the chuckles of Anthony Ainley. On paper these lines are ridiculous, but on screen they're even worse. The general quality of the acting inclines towards melodrama and the vocal delivery of many in the cast, especially Bonnie Langford, is very stagey.

There, I've done it, I've mentioned Bonnie Langford. I was dreading the excruciating scenes in the TARDIS and the appalling brashness of Bonnie basically portraying herself. But as I watched the story I began, if not to like the character of Mel then at least to tolerate her. Bonnie Langford should never have been cast at all, but at least she gave it her all and her character is not bogged down by the excess baggage that marred Sophie Aldred's "portrayal" of Ace (who at last appears to have replaced Sarah-Jane as the most over-rated companion of all time). Whether my more laid back attitude to Bonnie is a result of having sat through seasons 25 and 26 I cannot completely say, but compared to that which followed, truthfully she isn't that bad. Likewise the story as a whole perks up whenever Colin Baker is on screen. Say what you like about his Doctor, but at least he was always in the foreground, the centre of attention in every scene. Colin's Doctor didn't have to pretend to be "more than just a Time Lord" to appear convincing, and his brash self-confidence is a more than refreshing contrast to his successor.

So seven years on and what do I make of the story? Well, I don't hate it anymore. Indeed I find it very watchable when compared to season twenty four, but then again that's not saying very much. At the same time however its defects, such as the script, production and incidental music, are painfully obvious when the story is viewed. If I had to categorise *Terror of the Vervoids* I would label it as generally inoffensive. It would not bother me if I did not see it again for another seven years, but then again if I had to watch it again next week I don't think the idea would terrify me. Perhaps branding it as "inoffensive" is the greatest indictment however, as going back to 1986 the programme itself appeared to be on trial. What was needed for season 23 was a set of episodes which would have reinvigorated the show both in the eyes of the fans and more importantly in the eyes of the viewing public at large. As a defence for the Doctor *Vervoids* merely hands more ammunition to the prosecution. As a defence for the programme, the whole epic of the *Trial*, and in particular *Terror of the Vervoids*, does much the same.

(5 - when what was needed was a 9)

Duncan Harvey

The Ultimate Cop-Out

THE TRIAL ends in confusion, with a plethora of different schemes and explanations fighting each other for attention and contradicting each other in such a way that the viewer is left with no idea what was really going on. Much of the blame for this must go to Pip and Jane Baker, who, denied access to the Holmes/Saward version of part fourteen (which doesn't seem to have been that impressive, to judge by the synopsis in Skaro), seem to have concluded that there must have been a twist in the tale, and therefore dismissed the explanation of the Valeyard and his actions given in part thirteen as a red herring, appending instead their own. That this proves to be a scheme so trivial as to be laughable, that it flatly contradicts or ignores points developed earlier on in the season apparently didn't bother them — nor did the absence of any real ending.

It's so frustrating, that a story with such promise — a re-examination of the Doctor's basic motives and nature — should end by displaying the worst sort of formula Who writing (villain taking over universe, hoist on his own improbably designed petard by the Doctor's sabotage). Throughout the story, points come to mind which leave one both intrigued and frustrated. The Valeyard wears no chapter seal — a hint of his origins in the Matrix, that he is not a 'real' Time Lord, or just a lazy designer? The Inquisitor calls the Doctor 'the accused' from the word go, yet the inquiry only becomes a trial in episode two — is this an early indication that this is a kangaroo court, or sloppy scripting? To begin with, it might have been the former, but by the end of the season, there can be little doubt left that it was the latter.

At the start of the season Michael Jayston, an actor who I was astonished and delighted to find in Doctor Who, was presumably ready to come on board permanently as a semi-regular, the new 'villain' to replace the Master. But by the end of the season he must have been glad to get out, the character he'd signed to play having been rewritten out of existence. The struggle of holding together characters whose basic concept and role in the story changed from episode to episode is all too clearly visible in his and Lynda Bellingham's work, and in the final episode the degeneration of the Valeyard from the startling new take on the Doctor's personality as which he began (with hindsight, every turn of phrase, every mannerism of the Valeyard seems to hint at his true identity) into a pantomime villain whose shallow nature is indicated when, his subterfuge exposed, he continues to wear his courtly robes, rather than a costume worthy of the thirteenth and final Doctor (and that's what he originally was — note where CT's People column listed Jayston in the lead-up to *Trial* — alongside the other Doctors, not Kate O'Mara and Anthony Ainley…) is complete.

A stupid waste of Holmes' last flash of genius. Just as, with no verdict even declared, the *Trial* itself proved a total waste of time.

Diane McGinn

PARADISE OF DEATH

SO, IT'S BACK, in a sense — and *Paradise of Death* proved to be, if not a pattern for the Doctor Who of the nineties (in spite of all the contemporary references and adult comments which would have been unacceptable twenty or even five years ago…), then an enjoyable interlude while we wait for more of the 'real' thing. And one definitely worthy of repetition.

The initial episode in the Space World camp provided an enjoyable opening, especially after the highly effective teaser aboard Freeth's ship (given a real boost by Peter Howell's expansive incidental music), but *Paradise of Death* really took off once the story reached Paracon (though the journey was irritating, as the Doctor persistently referred to his ship as 'TARDIS'). In contrast to The New Adventures, which don't yet seem to have taken the opportunity to described a wide-ranging alien civilisation, concentrating instead on the near-future of Earth, Paracon was sketched out in brush-strokes which, while broad, described a much wider picture than most TV stories could provide. A society run by businessmen, entirely dependent on service industries, where most of the population is unemployed and in which everyone who matters is a middle class shareholder and there's a new class structure… Perhaps this was Doctor Who for the eighties as much as the nineties. Certainly, *Paradise of Death* followed in the oldest SF tradition of all — satire, though fairly gentle satire in this case. That might perhaps be down to the influence of producer Phil Clarke, who came to *Paradise of Death* more or less direct from the Radio Four madhouse that is Week Ending. Having seen how a number of producers handled the Week Ending non-commissioned writers' meeting, I can say that none impressed me with his enthusiasm and genuine interest more than Clarke, and Doctor Who was very fortunate in recruiting him as its 'latest' producer.

The performances of the regular cast were a mixed bag. Jon Pertwee, unfortunately, was clearly showing his age in a way he's never seemed to at conventions, sounding more like Wurzel wearing his "edicated" head than the Doctor on occasion. Lis Sladen recaptured Sarah Jane perfectly, though Sarah's use of terms like 'Blimey O Reilly' was irritating, in character neither with Sarah Jane herself nor with the nineties attitudes prevalent elsewhere — a 'bloody hell' or two would have seemed less jarring.

Despite the noticeable change in his voice since the nineteen seventies, Nicholas Courtney's performance somehow managed nevertheless to recapture exactly the Brigadier of the time. The script's treatment of the Brigadier was interesting, if not astonishing. In many ways, *Paradise of Death* saw the first appearance of the *real* Lethbridge Stewart, the highly intelligent soldier, since the military buffoon began to surface during season eight. He's learnt from past experiences, and therefore checks that the Doctor really *is* dead. The Doctor doesn't need to explain things to him — once something's pointed out to him, he can work out the significance for himself. He even knows that you can't reverse the polarity of a neutron flow (it would be pretty difficult to make them flow in the first place, come to that…)! An unexpected renaissance for the character, and one which made *Paradise of Death* worthwhile by itself.

Jeremy seems to have got rather under the skin of other reviewers, but I must admit to quite liking him. It would have been nice if he'd become a little less incompetent once away from Earth, in tried and tested companion fashion, but the placement of a Nigel Pargeter type in Harry Sullivan's place aboard the TARDIS seemed entirely appropriate as Doctor Who transferred to radio.

The ever reliable Harold Innocent and Peter Miles provided an effective pair of villains, the former more so perhaps, because he was not the typical Who nasty, whereas the sadistic security chief is a character very familiar from the series (not least thanks to Peter Miles' Nyder!). Moving ever closer to the top each episode, they never quite went over it (with the possible exception of the scenes in episode four where Freeth, lacking any real role in the plot that week, wallows a little too much in his indulgences…) Freeth continually sidestepped the cliches of villainy — "You know what I'm going to do — the question is how!" and pulled a number of unexpected 'rabbits' from his hat in a way which kept the serial ticking over nicely. Jonathan Tafler gave Captain Rudley effective conviction, and among the rest of the cast, radio staples such as Richard Pearce and particularly Jane Slavin acquitted themselves well, though the early episodes included rather too many 'Hammer extra' cockneys for my liking.

As I write, this issue is scheduled to hit the streets a few days before the transmission of *Paradise of Death*'s final episode, which rather limits the comments I can make on the conclusion without spoiling it for listeners. Suffice it to say that I found it rather disappointing — some promising plot-lines petered out, never coming to a head, while the Brigadier's victory was rather too easy, almost ignored in favour of an unnecessary set-piece involving the Doctor. Tragan's final appearance was also a little disappointing, though Peter Miles assures me that he turned on his guard and escaped the minute he was out of the Brigadier's sight… The details of the Paracon operation were unconvincing when studied closely — firstly, the forced fertilisation couldn't possibly have maintained productivity for more than a year or so, and more significantly, if the President's grandfather was responsible for discovering Rapine, then he must have been responsible for maintaining its cultivation while he ran the Corporation, and would have known how its growth was maintained. And I could have done without the drag scene, and the references to Onya's 'sky-born' nature, which seemed like a flimsy attempt to add some fashionably new-age philosophy to the script, and which culminate in a final comment from the Doctor which is up there amongst the most irritating and shallow of Pertwee 'lessons'.

But these were only minor disappointments. *Paradise of Death* was not a ground breaking story. Not a classic piece of Who. But all in all, *Paradise of Death* was a highly enjoyable way to spend an a couple of hours… (7)

Anthony Brown

POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

I BBC Radio Five - Photo by Tully Chaudry

Quatermass & the Pit

In DWB91, Jeremy Bentham referred to the disappointment that *Quatermass & the Pit* was slow and ponderous. *Neil Andrew & Nigel Rainford* examine the TV serial and the Hammer film and suggest that this is a landmark piece of science fiction concerned with an ever more relevant theme - Racism

"We are armed with knowledge of the ancient destructive urges in us that grow more deadly as our population increases… Every war crisis, witch hunt, race riot, purge is a reminder and a warning. We are the Martians — if we cannot control the inheritance within us, this will be their second dead planet."

NIGEL KNEALE has often said that current social concerns have influenced his work: *Quatermass II* arose from public suspicions over the appearance of mysterious government and industrial complexes around the country. His later works *The Year of the Sex Olympics* and Wine of India were inspired by the population explosion and the development of organ transplants. Though he cites the number of unexploded bombs being found in London as the basis for *Quatermass and the Pit*, he draws on the fifties' wave of racism, weaving it into the plot in a manner revealing both perception and alarming implications.

Starlog has called Kneale the finest writer of TV SF and a true giant of the genre, with his undoubted strengths being highly inventive storylines that show a daring confidence unlimited by convention. Modest Kneale was rather taken aback, seeing himself not as writer of SF but of something disguised as SF. His breach of the genre's restrictions arose from his general ignorance of the field — thus he was ignorant of its restrictions. However, claiming characterisation as his strength and that his stories are really mysteries belies his talent as a story-teller.

Ray Bradbury once said "Science fiction pretends to look into the future but it's really looking at a reflection of the truth immediately in front of us." This neatly describes *The Pit* — its deep rooted message is a shocking indictment of society expressed in such a subtle way that its impact is much greater (and that the BBC were to deny one was even intended).

In the late fifties Britain was experiencing the post war affluence that prompted Prime Minister Macmillan's "You never had it so good" (though that comment was actually a paraphrase.) The negative side to this was the growth in hostility towards migrant workers who had been invited in by the Government to help ease the labour shortage. 492 Jamaicans were the first to arrive in 1948, this increased around 1953 and by 1958 there were over 180,000 ethnic people, mainly West Indian, in Britain, all employed, often in unskilled jobs no-one else wanted.

As the labour crisis eased, housing took its place. There were many strikes and protests in the workplace by white people against the continuing influx of immigrants. Tension was being expressed with greater openness, not least by certain politicians: Enoch Powell made the first of his hostile comments on the field of race relations which would eventually culminate in the 'Rivers of Blood' speech which ended his ministerial career in 1968. The tabloid press often exaggerated such events and the issue became prime material for TV.

In 1955 a BBC documentary Special Enquiry - *Has Britain a Colour Bar* featured an interview with an unnamed estate agent: *"If I had a house to let in a terrace, I should think twice about letting it to a coloured person, I don't know quite what the feeling would be among the other tenants. How would you like it if a house next door to you was taken by a coloured person and became filled to bursting point with all his relations and his friends…?"*

It's ironic that this was shown the same year that ITV began and that the BBC pursued the issue so eagerly, for the corporation was to be criticised for its lack of attention to public tastes, but this was only a part of the broadcasting revolution in the fifties. TV viewing increased at an amazing rate: in 1950 200,000 licences were issued; in 1960 there were 10 million. There was a swing from Radio to TV and ITV was the benefactor capturing 70% of the audience by 1960. The Beeb fought back with shows such as Hancock's Half Hour but still clung to the view of TV as an educator — the Lime Grove tribute showed an example of Saturday night prime time viewing: a documentary on a fish canning factory in Grimsby!

The Pit was broadcast around Christmas 1958, not long after a period of unrest that forced the Government to acknowledge racism as a serious social problem and to act on it. August and September were literally riotous with pitched battles in Nottingham where the police were criticised for dealing with the black rioters in a biased manner. There were longer, more serious confrontations in London with the Notting Hill riots being the result of tension that had been apparent for four years. Media coverage was frequent and it didn't take much foresight to see how this problem might develop; indeed the first episode mentions riots in Birmingham (thereby attracting complaints from local leaders).

The serial is definitely an instance of building on what went before and marks the peak of Kneale's collaboration with producer Rudolph Cartier, who united a quality cast and crew to bring out the best in both. Two performances are particularly outstanding.

COLOURED LEADERS CRITICIZE B.B.C.

BIRMINGHAM REACTION TO TELEVISION PLAY

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

BIRMINGHAM, Dec. 23

Leaders of coloured minorities here to-day criticized the B.B.C. for allowing a report that "race riots are continuing in Birmingham" to be included in a fictional news bulletin during the first instalment of the new Quatermass television play last night.

Dr. W. C. Pilgrim, of the West Indian community, said: "I do not agree with this sort of thing, fiction or not. No trouble of this kind has happened in Birmingham, where our problems do not find expression in violence." The reference, he said, was particularly unfortunate because it might create an anti-West Indian attitude among English people at a time when the coloured leaders were encouraging sympathy between the races.

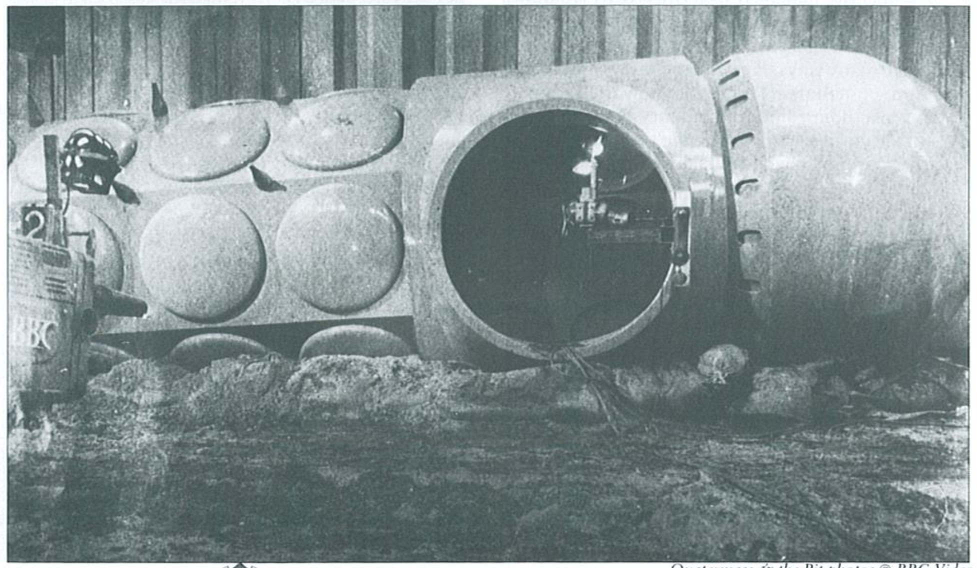
Dr. C. J. K. Piliso, of the Afro Caribbean Association, said the B.B.C. had "misrepresented conditions in Birmingham,"

A B.B.C. official, expressing surprise at the criticism, said: "This was a completely imaginary news bulletin in a fictional programme set in the indeterminate future that contained such items as a rocket landing on the moon. It was all Jules Verne sort of stuff. No slur on Birmingham was implied and no reference to past events nor prophecy of the future was intended."

Andre Morell is ideal as Quatermass. He makes the character both likeable and believable; warm and humorous yet deadly serious when required. He is an authority figure and really in charge of the Hobbs Lane dig despite Colonel Breen's presence. Cec Linder is also well cast as Dr. Roney as his long friendship with Quatermass is a major plus, adding to the character immensely even when he is overshadowed by Breen's arrival. What zest both actors inject into their role — Quatermass' reminiscence of boyhood tales about Mars is a prime example. The rapport between the two makes their scenes that more effective, more so in the climactic witch hunt, and one genuinely feels Quatermass' grief at Roney's death.

The audience is rarely one step ahead of the characters and it's not until more evidence emerges that the complete picture is revealed. What other ancient horrors lie in Westminster Abbey's archives?!? Clever little moments abound (Quatermass finds rust streaks in the mud — the hull's engines, corroded out of existence.) This pattern bears strong resemblance to the Sherlock Holmes stories, and the maxim "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable must be the truth!"

Considering racism and prejudice is a brave idea in any drama, but here it is never stressed. There are references such as the Birmingham riots, but for the most part it bubbles under the surface until the last episode with the superstition/black magic elements used to build up the tension. Using the medium to carry a message can backfire — *The March* was criticised in that its scenario of starving Africans marching on Europe was riddled with implausibility. *Quatermass and the Pit* is effective specifically because its message isn't marred through obvious didacticism.



Quatermass & the Pit photos © BBC Video

What Kneale says is that racism can pop up, out of control, anywhere, in any setting — a message which should now have particular significance for anyone to whom Yugoslavia was once a pleasantly unspoiled holiday destination. The hull is found in the heart of a city and disrupts all sense of normality —a street erupts into violence, and what we would perceive as ordinary folk act with extreme viciousness. Racism can occur in the most unlikely places, cutting right into the heart of society, but usually emerges cloaked by other issues — complaints about housing or litter strewn streets — most people beginning such remarks by commenting "I'm not a racist but…"

Quatermass and the Pit's availability on video allows a much deeper evaluation of the serial than before. Whatever the technical shortcomings, the sheer intelligence of the script easily rises above them. The Martians' plan has worked well with mankind imbued with the compulsion to root out non-conformity. The concept of the Martian image acting as a focus for the wild hunt is the SF interpretation of attitudes towards black people in the fifties —their arrival triggering the racism inbred into each of us, and the desire (the natural desire?) to destroy all that is different. **"We are the Martians."** This is the lynchpin of the story — the idea that we are all prejudiced in greater or lesser degrees. Psychologists have repeated that such views are passed down through generations but the serial points out that some have managed to rise above such in-bred ideas and indeed it is with these people that hope lies.

This bears surprising similarities to some of the issues in *Genesis of the Daleks*. Quatermass' declaration that we are men "not mechanical computers" parallels the removal of vital ethics from the Daleks. Also Davros's reaction to Ronson is apt: "My creature showed a natural desire, an instinct to destroy!" Whether this is co-incidental is, in Davros' own words "A fascinating idea!"

So what about the film? The first question is why it took so long to reach the big screen. This may stem from Kneale's dislike of the first two adaptations, especially *Quatermass II* which he disowned, for on this film he wrote it alone. This allowed him to stay faithful to the serial yet prune it to a realistic length. Very little of note is omitted even though the original six episodes contained almost no padding and for once there was no outside interference with the script.

Ironically this long gap shows how accurate the warnings of the fifties were. Racism continued into the sixties, despite a variety of race relation acts, and became an increasing foreign concern — the Civil Rights movement in the US was one of the most infamous clashes with prejudice whilst in Britain the people of the Smethwick district of Birmingham not only forced an all-too-willing council to evict black residents but elected an MP who promised repatriation. Such events were hardly few and far between.

The film itself also marked the turnaround in Hammer's fortunes. After this most of their output slumped in quality and by 1970 when boss Sir James Carreras retired, even insiders such as producer Aida Young feel the studio had run out of steam. To those familiar only with the Hammer version it is one of the company's best efforts, and they pulled out all the stops with many of their best technicians contributing. It remains one of the few SF movies to make its audience think and it offers ideas way above those of the average flick. It's ironic that *2001* arrived the year after, being considered perhaps the ultimate intellectual movie, and it made SF respectable if nothing else. However the film has its faults. Roy Ward Baker was never a gifted director and he's definitely no Rudolph Cartier. Scenes that should be filled with tension are flat, most notably when the Martians are discovered in their craft. The serial builds this up slowly, from unscrewing the bulkhead to the slow tracking shot that gradually reveals the insects. The film has a crackle of energy and that's it. Dramatic yes but so flatly directed that it dissipates the impact - the cast hardly react to it, and the compartment is all too obviously sheet plastic. Filming in colour is also a disadvantage as it robs the film of much of its tension. The first two films, in black and white, may not be perfect but have a great deal of atmosphere.

The Martians themselves are disappointing, looking too much like plastic grass-hoppers to be effective. Hammer's trademark of gore pops up here with the insects oozing muck, just to give the audience a good eyeful. In the serial, remarks about the stench were sufficient. However the design of the hull, as unusual as in the serial, and Les Bowie's excellent FX more than compensate. The finale — Roney swinging the crane into the Martian image — is superb. With a piece of electronic music from Tristram Cary it is the only real chilling part of the film and only here does the use of colour work. This is the only instance where the film is superior to the serial; the latter's version of the Martian witch hunt videotape and the melting of the hull are far better done despite the small budget.

The other technical area where the serial succeeds is in the music and sound effects. This was one of the first TV productions handled by the BBC Radiophonic Workshop and Desmond Briscoe's stomach churning sounds are truly "Foul noises sent by the Devil". Tristram Cary's score is for the most part inferior to Trevor Duncan's music which is genuinely eerie and the serial benefits no end from it.

Cast wise there is deficiency all round and fine actors like Julian Glover are shadows of their predecessors. Andrew Keir and James Donald are no substitute for Morell and Linder and even the supporting roles are lacking. Hammer regularly reused a certain group of actors and one therefore wonders why Michael Ripper didn't reprise his role as the Sergeant. The only two roles that don't suffer are drill operator Sladden and Miss Judd. Duncan Lamont came almost full circle here having played the luckless Victor Caroon in the first serial, and Barbara Shelley is at her best, especially when possessed by the Martians.

The most serious defect is the virtual elimination of the racism subtext and Quatermass's final speech which sums up the whole message. This severely lessens the impact of the film — Leslie Halliwell notes that subtlety was never Hammer's forte and the moral/philosophical elements in the serials were largely lost in the films.

It's not surprising that American audiences can't see why Kneale is so highly regarded as most have seen only the films. Given the success of *2001*, one wonders how *The Pit* would have been received had it been more like the serial —could it have been hailed as one of the all time great SF movies?

Tales of the serial emptying pubs an clubs are widespread and two parodies followed within a few weeks of the last episode. *The Horror Serial* episode of Hancock's Half Hour was a direct send-up, as was The Goons' version *The Scarlet Capsule*, still available on tape, complete with the original Radiophonic effects (and of course, Manopticon saw the premiere of Mark Gattis' superb tribute, *Quatermass and the Hat!*). The repeat of episode three as part of TV 50 in 1986 brought requests for the rest and the video has very little cut out.

Collins' English Dictionary defines 'CLASSIC' as "serving as a model of its kind", and the serial certainly is. The BBC Video article in DWB93 pointed out the issue of permanence and *The Pit* is a good example of this. It's a document of the fifties showing how Kneale was right — we have become more dangerous as we have become more complex.

A schools' history book on fifties life lists several famous programmes including *The Pit* and tells children to ask their parents and grand-parents about it. A fitting tribute.

Neil Andrew & Nigel Rainsford

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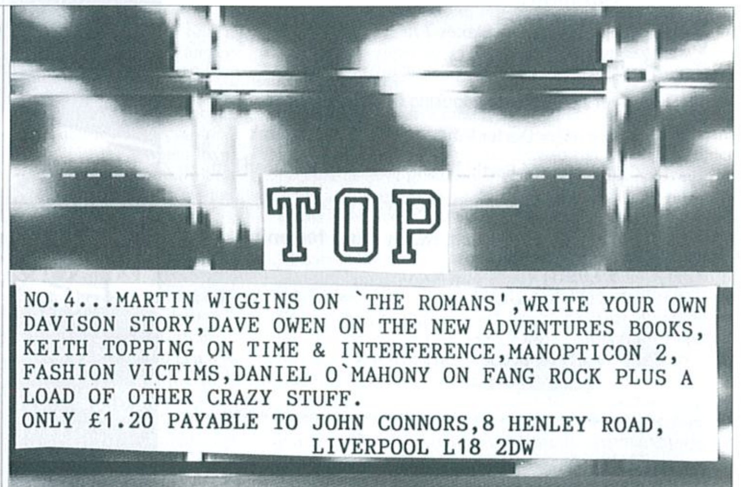

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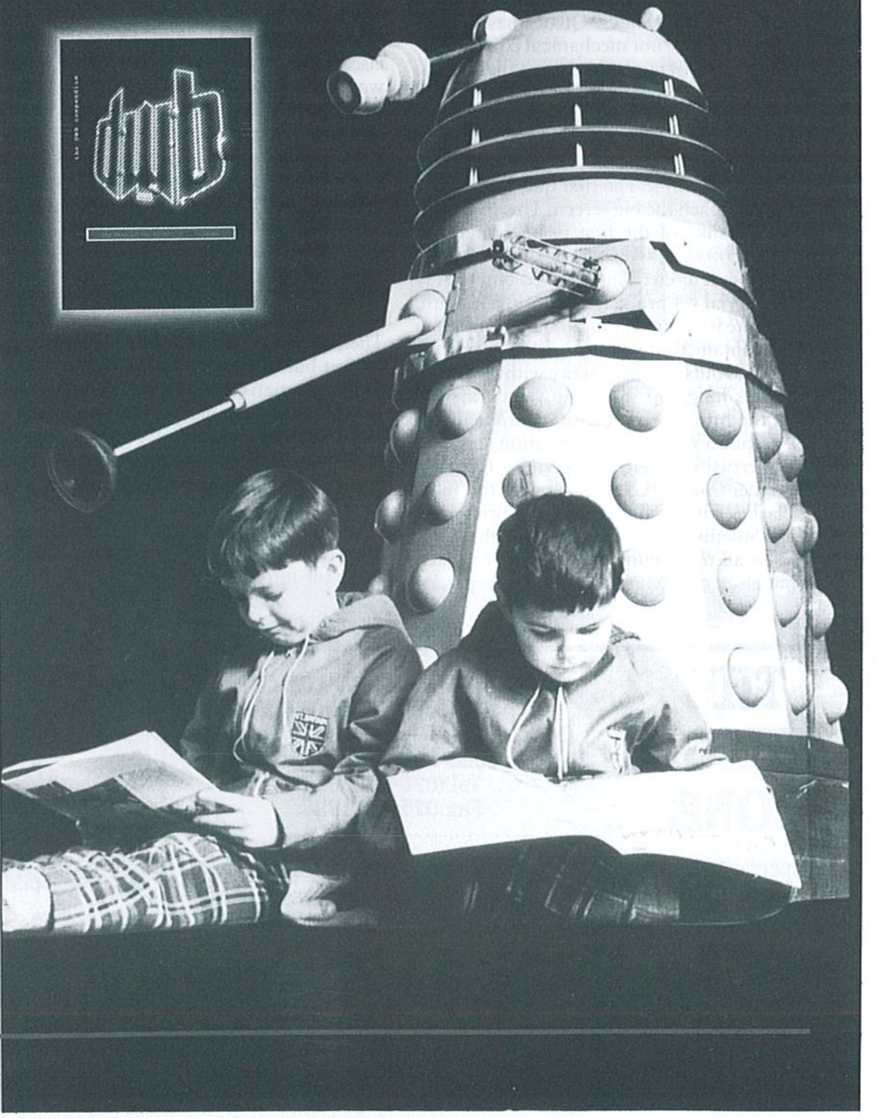


STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION

21)**Frame of Mind** 8th May 1993

WRITTEN BY BRANNON BRAGA; DIRECTOR JAMES L. CONWAY; MUSIC JAY CHATTAWAY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR RON MOORE

Jonathan Frakes gets to pull out all the stops as Riker becomes unsure what is real and what is illusion.

Commander Riker is nervous as he prepares to star in a highly dramatic but grim study of a man in an insane asylum who insists that he is sane and not guilty of a crime that he keeps being asked about. He keeps forgetting his lines in a final scene with Data, who plays his doctor. Beverly Crusher reassures him that he will be fine on opening night...

Wandering the corridors he notices an odd looking alien crewman staring at him. He cannot remember ever seeing the man before and finds him disturbing. He discusses the situation on Tilonus Four, where some of the factions fighting for power are resorting to torture to obtain information about any weapons that may be useful — placing a Federation research team on the planet in great peril — with Picard, and it is decided that Riker will beam down alone dressed as a native to contact the team, who are believed to have gone into hiding.

Riker hopes that this assignment will allow him to bow out of the play gracefully, but Picard — who doesn't want to substitute for Riker — points out that it will take five days to reach Tilonus Four. During a briefing with Worf on Tilonian customs and weapons the Commander's face gets cut, and while visiting sickbay for treatment, a burn victim stares at him in a manner which makes him feel so uncomfortable that he goes to see Deanna Troi.

He tells her that he felt guilty. In fact, for the last few days he has felt just like the character in "Frame of Mind," the play he is rehearsing. Deanna says this may be a sign that he is becoming a real actor and is not concerned. But on the night of the performance, as he finishes the final scene, he sees the strange alien crewman standing next in the audience. Then the audience disappears entirely and when he turns to Data, the doctor is now another alien, who asks him who he is.

He is no longer sure, and is having trouble remembering much of anything. He thinks he is in Starfleet but the alien tells him they have checked and no officers of his description are reported missing. Doctor Syrus tells him the injury to his face occurred when he tried to escape and that his confusion is a sign of improvement, "you used not to be able to break away from your starship fantasy as all."

Riker learns he is in ward 47 of the Tilonus Institute of Mental Disorders and is making excellent progress, though he is locked in his room. However he is allowed to eat in the common room today since he seems better. This is populated by several other members of the same alien race as the staff, all of whom have rather vacant looks. When his guard leaves him to get a lunch tray one of them comes over to him and says she is with Starfleet too and she has managed to contact a starship with her communicator — but then speaks into her spoon. The guard tells Riker that he murdered a man and will stand trial if he is cured. Riker attacks him but is injected with a huge needle... and wakes up in his quarters on the Enterprise.

He tells Beverly about his dream as he prepares to go on in the play. During the final scene Data's face changes into that of Mavek, the guard from the mental ward. He grabs a member of the audience whom he thinks is an alien but he is told that this is a new crewman. Beverly takes him to sickbay but the corridor changes back and forth between the Enterprise and the mental institution, and the Tilonian ward seems more real to him...

As the alternate realities play out over and over again, this story bears a passing resemblance to *Cause and Effect*, which was a more engrossing story. Since we know that Riker is neither insane nor a criminal, the only question for the audience is where is he really at and what is causing his shifts in perspective. The answer to that is not terribly surprising. But it does give Jonathan Frakes a chance to display more dramatic muscle than Number One usually gets to flex and proves once again that Frakes has improved considerably from the very wooden actor he was at the start of the series six years ago. David Spelburg is Doctor Syrus and Gary Werntz is the sadistic Mavek. Susanna Thompson appears briefly as the inmate with the spoon. Andrew Prine is an administrator. You will not be surprised to learn that the Tilonians have lumpy foreheads. (7)

22)**Suspicions** 15th May 1993

WRITTEN BY JOE MENOSKY AND NAREN SHANKAR; DIRECTOR CLIFF BOLE; MUSIC DENNIS MCCARTHY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR DAVID STIPES

Beverly Crusher kicks over the traces and disobeys orders - and proves once again how deadly doctors can be with a phaser in their hands.

Guinan goes to Doctor Crusher's quarter's requesting treatment for tennis elbow, where the ship's CMO tells her she will have see Doctor Selar. Beverly is packing to catch a shuttle which will take her to Starbase 23, then on to Earth and a formal hearing. "Then my career ends."

Beverly's troubles began when she attended a conference where in the research of a Ferengi scientist, Doctor Reyga. Since no one else seemed willing to listen to him, Beverly decided to invite a small group researching the field to a meeting on board the Enterprise. Only four of the invitees were interested in his research — Kurak, a Klingon woman, Jo'Bril, a Takaran man, and a Vulcan, T'pan, married to human colleague, Dr Chostopher. Reyga claimed to have developed a metaphasic shield which could protect ships from a variety of harmful radiations. The scepticism of the other scientists prompted Reyga to offer a demonstration — piloting a shuttle fitted with the device into the corona of a particularly dense sun. The others pointed out that he was hardly an objective observer and, so, Jo'Bril volunteered instead. Jo'Bril safely flew deep into the corona. But Jo'Bril was suddenly stricken and they lost contact. Jo'Bril was then transported to sickbay where Beverly tried unsuccessfully to save him. There was no obvious sign of how he died, and while the other scientists insisted that the shield was an obvious failure, Reyga was convinced that his device worked.

Beverly tells Guinan how she felt responsible for this death. The autopsy proved puzzling, as she had never seen a Takaran or any similar species before. There were no distinct internal organs and the star's radiation had been minimal inside the craft. Reyga checked the shuttle with Data and Geordi, but could find no malfunctions in the systems. Beverly banned further tests despite Reyga's plea that he be allowed to pilot another. Shortly thereafter, Reyga was found dead of plasma burns in one of the science labs.

Beverly was convinced that it was murder, not suicide, and hoped for evidence from the autopsy. However, Reyga's family asked that the body not be touched until they could claim it and perform the Ferengi death ritual. Therefore Beverly dutifully set out to question the other scientists, reasoning that Reyga's competitors might have wished to silence him.

Beverley then discovered that Reyga and the Klingon had had a loud quarrel. Reyga had accused Kurak of sabotaging his equipment and she told him he would pay if he repeated such lies. When Beverly asked her if she did sabotage the shuttle, Kurak threw her across the room.

At a dead end, Beverly returned to Reyga's body and decided to perform the autopsy anyway. Unfortunately, she found nothing useful and turned herself into Captain Picard, who told her that she had put them both in a very difficult position. She accepted full responsibility for them for any diplomatic repercussions.

Guinan refuses to feel sorry for Beverly, and asks her why she is sitting around her cabin if she believes there is a murderer on board. After all, the worst anyone can do to her is to relieve her of duty, and that has already happened...

Producer Jeri Taylor, left in charge of the TNG writing staff after Michael Piller and Rick Berman focused on DS9, carried through on efforts to make both Doctor Crusher and Deanna Troi more forceful and independent this season. The plot device of having much of the story told in flashback to Guinan is distracting but not a major annoyance. More nagging doubts arise from Beverly's sudden interest in pure science and Peter Slutsker's tall Ferengi. Not only is Reyga taller than any Ferengi we have seen, he has good manners and always behaves in a socially acceptable fashion, never once complaining about the women being fully clothed! He simply is a human with exceptionally large ears and there was no point at all in making him a Ferengi, nor is a Ferengi scientist interested in pure research a believable concept.

James Horan is Jo'Bril, whose makeup is quite akin to the excellent reptile look devised for Tosk on DS9. Joan Stuart Morris is T'pan and John S. Ragin is her human husband, two other weak characterizations. Tricia O'Neil gives a much more rousing performance as Kurak, and is unrecognizable as the same actress who played Rachel Garrett, the much remembered Captain of the Enterprise-C in *Yesterday's Enterprise*. And, finally, Patti Yasutake gets a larger role as Nurse Alicia Ogawa, Crusher's assistant for years.(6)

23)**Rightful Heir** 22nd May 1993

TELEPLAY BY RONALD D. MOORE; STORY BY JAMES E. BROOKS; DIRECTOR WINRICH KOLBE; MUSIC JAY CHATTAWAY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR RON MOORE

A Klingon saga brings Gowron back once again. But this time the story idea was submitted by a fan and it is not surprising, therefore, that a character is resurrected from the annals of the original Star Trek series. Strange things happen when Worf takes an interest in Klingon mysticism.

When Worf fails to report to the bridge for duty, he is found deeply immersed in some sort of Klingon ritual, having transformed his rooms into a sort of temple, complete with open fires that are starting to burn the room. Captain Picard warns Worf that his personal affairs are his own concern until they interfere with the operation of the ship. Worf reveals that he has been deeply troubled ever since the events of Birthright II, when he taught Klingon youngsters about their heritage, and told them stories about Kahless, the greatest Klingon warrior. Kahless gave Klingons strength and honour, then left them for Sto-Vo-Kor, the place where honoured warriors may join him after death. But Kahless also promised to return one day.

Since then Worf has felt empty and has begun to doubt the strength of his own beliefs. He was trying to summons a vision of Kahless in his cabin. Picard says that it may be what he is looking for cannot be found on the Enterprise. Taking leave, Worf decides he should go to Boreth, a rocky and forbidding place sacred to Klingons which is inhabited by High Clerics and those who fast and pray for visions. Worf does so for days but fails to receive any insights. But Koroth, the leader of the Clerics, urges him to continue. Later, as Worf stares at the flames in a cavern, a figure appears. Worf believes he is having a vision of Kahless until the man touches him and announces, "I am Kahless and I have returned."

'Kahless' tells the sceptical High Clerics (it is 1500 years since Kahless made his promise) how he made the first bat'telh sword from his own hair and a volcano and thus convinces them, as the story was deliberately kept secret to test anyone who claimed to be Kahless. Worf checks his tricorder, but it only tells him that the figure before him is a real Klingon. Then Worf asks how Kahless knew his name and he says that he appeared to Worf when he was a child, and told him he would do something no other Klingon has done before. Worf admits that he had such a vision.

Kahless proclaims that he has returned because his people have lost their way and become corrupt. He becomes weary of Worf's questions, and they both become angry and raise their swords. The onlookers are terrified, but Kahless laughs and asks if they have forgotten what it is to be Klingon. The sight of two warriors fighting for honour should move them to song.

Worf summons the Enterprise to take Kahless and a delegation of Clerics aboard. Gowron, requests that 'Kahless' be held on the Enterprise until his arrival. Worf is willing to suggest Kahless may be real and Picard accepts that they cannot rule anything out and must treat 'Kahless' as an honoured guest. When Gowron arrives he cannot believe that Picard has not analysed this pretender with every conceivable instrument. He is worried about the spread of "poisonous lies." — Kahless is dead but the idea of Kahless lives and the rumour of his return must be stopped here before the Empire is destroyed. Gowron has brought a sacred relic, a knife which is said to be covered with the blood of Kahless, so that a genetic comparison can be made. Kahless agrees to the test and Dr. Crusher finds identical patterns. Gowron still refuses to accept Kahless.

Worf gives Kahless some warnog from the replicator, but apologises for the poor fidelity of the replication. Kahless can't seem to tell the difference. When Worf asks him about Sto-Vo-Kor, Kahless says he cannot answer his questions. In this form he knows only about this world. He knows that Worf is influential in the Empire and the Federation and asks for his help in reviving Klingon honour. Gowron also wants Worf's help in opposing Kahless. He says he will not hand the Empire over to Koroth, who has always opposed him. He asks Worf to stand with him, but he refuses. Worf believes that Kahless offers the chance for Klingons to revive the pure warriors within themselves. The divisions are already forming as some of Gowron's officers have come over from his ship and are refusing to leave until they see Kahless...

Given this is a Klingon saga, there must be political intrigue aplenty, and Robert O'Reilly excels at portraying Gowron as a man who has come to the top not so much because he is the greatest warrior, but because he is the most astute counter-plotter in the Empire. Worf, who often seems to be the ONLY Klingon left who believes in all that honour stuff precisely because he did not grow up in the Empire, has never been terribly comfortable with Gowron's zealous opportunism and shady politics. The solution to this confrontation seems highly unstable as well as being of questionable integrity, and left the situation essentially unresolved for future exploration. Hopefully that will include a return of Tony Todd as Worf's brother Kurn, who has not been seen for two years.

Kevin Conway gives a sympathetic performance as Kahless, although the Christ-like quality of the role is a burden. Alan Oppenheimer is Koroth. Norman Snow and Charles Esten also seeks wisdom on Boreth.(7)

24)Second Chances 29th May 1993

Teleplay by Rene Echevarria; Story by Michael A. Medlock; Director LeVar Burton; Music Dennis McCarthy; Visual Effects Supervisor Davis Stipes

LeVar Burton joins Jonathan Frakes and Patrick Stewart in making his directorial debut with the series in a story that was originally to be called *A Tale of Two Rikers*. Most of us have thought that one was plenty, but mark II actually has some charm.

The Enterprise is going to a planet which is so cloaked in such a strong distortion field that it is only possible to bean down to its surface a few times every eight years as it travels close to its sun. Riker barely made it off the surface eight years before when, as a Lieutenant on the Potemkin, he led an away team to retrieve a team of scientists housed in a research station on the surface and his transporter beam was nearly lost in the distortion. He was decorated and promoted as a result of the mission. Now they are returning to retrieve the computer data base from the station during the three brief periods over the next two days when it will be possible to transport down. Beaming down, Data picks up lifesigns on his tricorder, and Riker notices changes in the base. They pull out their phasers but Riker finds himself facing a man in a ragged gold uniform who looks just like himself.

The new arrival declares that he is Lt. William Riker of the Potemkim, and that he was trapped here eight years ago. Lt. Riker is sent to sickbay where Beverly Crusher finds that this is not a clone or a surgical alteration. The two men are genetically indistinguishable and their brain scans are virtually identical. Lt Riker is assigned quarters while an investigation continues.

LaForge suggests that when the transporter chief on the Potemkin saw he was losing Riker, he instituted a second containment beam which he was going to reintegrated on the ship to boost signal strength. Somehow this beam was reflected to the surface, where a second Will Riker materialised aided by the planet's distortion field. They are both real and both Will Riker, although Lt. Riker has lived a different life for the last eight years. The philosophical and practical problems this poses are put aside while the problem of retrieving the data base is resolved. The computer system was either damaged or altered by Lt. Riker, making it difficult to activate the core & download the data. Picard suggest that Lt. Riker may be able to help and Troi says she will ask him to return to the surface.

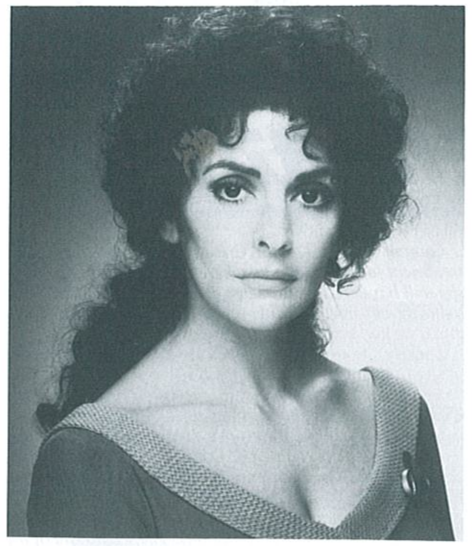
Lt. Riker's responds to seeing Troi by sweeping her into his arms and calls her "Imzadi." At the time Lt. Riker was unknowingly left behind, Cmdr Riker had been deeply involved with Troi after a posting to her home world. They had agreed to meet six weeks later on Risa but Cmdr Riker never kept that appointment, instead taking the opportunity that his promotion represented and pouring his energy into his career. Lt. Riker, on the other hand, made it through the last eight years thinking about seeing Deanna again. He says he cannot just give up and would like to be with her again. He thinks Cmdr Riker is a fool to have abandoned what they had, but he seems relieved that she has not been intimate with his twin since they found themselves both assigned to the Enterprise.

Lt. Riker is late beaming down and they only have 36 minutes in which to work. The latent friction between the twins comes to the fore when Lt. Riker says he will stay on the surface to freeing up the computer core while they wait for the third and final window in the distortion field. Cmdr Riker orders him back to the ship and is furious when his double still tries to stay.

Lt. Riker pursuing Troi, and getting her to Ten Forward. He talks a bit about wanting to get his career back in gear, but mostly they talk about the past. She finally admits how disappointed she was that Cmdr Riker did not keep that rendezvous on Risa. Picard tells Cmdr Riker that Lt. Riker suggested going into caverns under the station to the actual core to directly tap into the data base, a plan Commander Riker previously rejected as too dangerous due to seismic activity. Picard overrules him.

Cmdr Riker meets with Deanna and says he recognizes the look in her eye — she used to have it for him. She doesn't have to ask his permission if she wants to be with Lt. Riker, but he warns her to be careful as he cannot believe that the other man will not make the same choices he did and he does not want her to be hurt again...

The only guest cast in this episode is Dr. Mae Jemison, the NASA astronaut, who appears briefly as a transporter officer. Other than that, the story is almost entirely carried by Jonathan Frakes and Marina Sirtis as the writers found a way to have their cake and eat it too - they maintain the rule that the senior officers are not going to get involved (a writers' rule, not a Starfleet rule) while granting in a way the request of the fans and the actors themselves that something more be made of their relationship. The biggest surprise is the fate of Lt. Riker. Supposedly, the writers actually lobbied to kill off Commander Riker just to shake things up! As it is, it must be a more interesting universe for Deanna.



Counsellor Deanna Troi (Marina Sirtis) © Paramount.

The downside of the story is the idiocy of the explanation offered for the existence of the twin and the ease with which everyone deals with having these two individuals around. In addition, Riker's alleged career is highly improbable. He was supposed to be a lieutenant on the Potemkin eight years ago and was promoted to Lt. Commander as a result of the away team. Yet he was assigned to the Enterprise as First Officer and a full Commander just two years later and was supposed to have served as First Officer on the Hood for some time before that. Of course, the various comments about Picard's pre-Enterprise career that have been dropped over the years do not add up coherently either.(7)

25)Timescape 19th June 1993

Written by Brannon Braga; Director Adam Nimoy; Music Dennis McCarthy; Visual Effects Supervisor David Stipes

Brannon Braga once again dabbles in time, with the usual confusing results. And Adam Nimoy must begin to wonder if he REALLY wants to direct after being handed the most undernourished script of the year - with the exception of the lamentable *Aquiel*.

Picard, Data, Troi & LaForge are on their way back to the Enterprise from a three day conference. Troi is shocked when everyone else seems to freeze in time for several seconds. The tricorder finds nothing amiss and Troi begins to dismiss the whole experience, until she freezes for over three minutes while the others observe her. They get no response from the Enterprise, so they speed towards the rendezvous point. Then one warp nacelle suddenly cuts out and sends them spinning. Data finds readings that indicate the nacelle has been running continuously for 47 days and has exhausted its fuel.

Picard notices that a bowl of fruit in the dining area has withered and reaching for it his hand begins to metabolize at an accelerated rate, causing his nails to grow. A temporal disturbance in the fabric of space intersects the table and extends outward to the starboard nacelle — and there are many other disturbances throughout this region of space. Moreover, the fragmentations are spread out along precisely the heading they should take towards the Enterprise.

The runabout proceeds very carefully to the ship, to find it frozen in space, locked in combat with an equally motionless Romulan warbird. Phaser fire streams from the Romulan ship, and some unknown type of beam lances from the deflector array of the Enterprise to the warbird's engineering area.

Data and Geordi adapt the phase discriminator in the transporter armbands to protect them from the temporal disturbance for short periods of time. LaForge remains behind to monitor their protective fields, while on the bridge the others find several armed Romulans and Riker on the floor. In sickbay, Troi finds that a Romulan has just shot Beverly with a disruptor beam at point blank range — if time resumes she will die. Picard finds Worf in the transporter room, apparently beaming groups of Romulans aboard. And Data finds that a disturbance in engineering is a warp core breach, which is still expanding, although at a very slow rate. The ship will be consumed in slightly more than nine hours. Picard suddenly loses control over his emotions as he laughs and then cries for no reason, before passing out. As they take him back to the runabout they fail to notice that one of the Romulans is not frozen...

It appears that about 30 minutes worth of script was written for this story, then it had to be furiously padded out to fill 45 minutes. Long winded impersonations of people met at the conference fill some time, as does Patrick Stewart's gratuitous histrionics in the engine room, said to be caused by a malfunction in his phase discriminator which gives him a temporal equivalent of the bends. All of which simply marks time until an alien can be found to explain what is happening. Will Beverly be saved? Checkout the next episode.

It was originally intended that the runabout used here would be borrowed from DS9, but budgets prevented scenes with any of that show's cast. Instead, this expanded interior view of the larger runabout's several rooms will be kept for use next season on DS9. Michael Bofshever plays an alien with a problem and John DeMita is a Romulan.(4)

26)Descent 26th June 1993

Teleplay by Ronald D. Moore; Story by Jeri Taylor; Director Alexander Singer; Music Jay Chattaway; Visual Effects Supervisor David Stipes

Every year since season three's Borg epic left viewers dangling on the edge of their chairs all summer the producers have claimed they were not going to do another cliffhanger... and every year they have given into the impulse to do another one despite a track record of writing very uneven instalments. This year one may hope that part I will be the weaker of the two.

While Data plays poker with Einstein, Hawking and an irritable Newton on the holodeck, the Enterprise receives a distress call from an insignificant outpost and arrives to find a ship of unknown configuration orbiting the planet. Electro magnetic interference prevents lifeform readings, and a team beams down to find that all 274 Starfleet personnel have been brutally killed. A search for survivors leads Data to a locked door which he forces open — revealing a Borg.

The first Borg is killed, but there are others, and they seem angry and vengeful about their fallen comrade. Simultaneously their ship fires on the Enterprise. Data engages in hand-to-hand combat with one of the Borg while Riker is startled to hear another refer to a fallen comrade by name and vow to make them pay for his death. Data manages to strangle the life from his opponent in fury, pounding the body against the wall. Suddenly, all the Borg, dead and living, are beamed out and their ship pulls out of orbit, disappearing into some sort of subspace distortion.

Data asks to be relieved of duty until he can determine if he has indeed experienced an emotion. He is somewhat disturbed that his first emotion should have been anger. The rest of the command staff discuss the Borg attack. Riker reports that these Borg are different — fast, aggressive and acting as individuals rather than as part of the Borg collective. The Borg objective also seems to have changed. They were ignoring technology in favour of killing people. Picard informs Starfleet of the situation while his crew analyse all data they can get on the new Borg ship and the distortion field that swallowed it.

An angry Admiral Nachev arrives to take command of the sector as a fleet of 15 ships assembled to combat a Borg invasion. Picard is to lead a task force composed of the Enterprise, the Crazy Horse and the Agamemnon, but the Admiral demands to know why he let Hugh Borg go when they could have sent him back to the collective implanted with a mechanism for exterminating the Borg. Picard argues that Hugh became a person capable of independent thought and action, and he had no choice but to respect his rights as an individual. The Admiral does not see it that way. He had a choice and he chose not to destroy their enemies, a decision for which they may now pay dearly.

Data tells Troi he has been trying to provoke other emotions in himself without success. She suggests that he work on being angry again, but he is worried about becoming a bad person. She believes he has no capacity for being bad, but he felt more than anger when he killed the Borg - he also felt pleasure. Picard broods over tapes of Hugh's conversations on the ship and wonders if he has made a grave mistake. Geordi finds Data trying to recreate the incident of killing the Borg in the holodeck and refuses to help him remove the safety limits of the holo-Borg's strength.

After many false alarms Enterprise locates the Borg. This time they are close enough to be drawn into the distortion field behind the Borg ship when it disappears. They reemerge into normal space far away and find the Borg ship wheeling to meet them. The ship fires and several Borg beam onto the bridge. One crewman is killed, as is one Borg, but another survives. The Borg flee, uncharacteristically leaving their dead behind. Picard orders an autopsy on the dead Borg in hopes of finding some difference from their records of Hugh. He also questions the captive survivor.

The prisoner tells them he is named Crosis. When Picard asks who gave him that name, he says that The One gave it to him, "The One who will destroy you." He denies that their goal is assimilation. Their mission is to destroy all inferior biological lifeforms. When the others leave the detention area, Data begins to analyse their prisoner. But Crosis tells Data he can be assimilated because he is not like the rest. And he can find what he has sought all his life - his emotions. Soon afterwards, an unauthorised shuttle leaves the ship, with Crosis and Data aboard...

Captain Picard makes a number of decisions in this story which are more questionable than letting Hugh go home. Perhaps he will be vindicated in Part II. Natalia Nogulich returns as the frosty Admiral, last seen in *Chain of Command*. Brian J. Cousins, Richard Gilbert-Hill, and Stephen James Carver are new model Borg. Hugh does not appear in Part I, but can be expected in Part II. The One turns out to be an old acquaintance of Data's... (6)

Kathleen Toth

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"F**k you, mate! Just f**k you, you f**king w****r!"

THIS, in case you hadn't guessed, is a New Adventure (OK - cheap comment), but a rather unusual one.

Despite its billing as the 'Doctor' half of the pair books begun by *Birthright*, *Iceberg* is not a 'Doctor' book. The Doctor barely appears until the second half of the book, and he is frankly irrelevant, except as an individual with detailed knowledge of the Cybermen. For the most part, *Iceberg* is a character study of two people — Pamela Cutler, daughter of General Cutler, and journalist Ruby Duvall, whose scientist father is run down by the biker who utters the immortal words above while distracted by the news of Mondas' return — two people whose lives are influenced by the seventies *Invasion*, and turned upside down by the arrival of *The Tenth Planet* on December 22nd 1986...

Of the two, I found Pam Cutler the more interesting character, which is unfortunate given her reduced role in the later stages of the book. The reversal of her attitudes provoked by her father's death (readers might be interested to note that when *Iceberg* was initially conceived as a TV story, back in the mid-eighties, Terry Cutler was the central character, replaced by his sister when David Banks was mistakenly informed that Terry died in the transmitted version of *The Tenth Planet 4*. His fate in *Iceberg* is more amusing.) is surprising, but believable once her quest for the details of her father's death becomes clear. Ruby's sudden attachment to her Nanocom is slightly less convincing, but her relations with the roughly sketched but adequate characters who make up the passengers and crew of the SS Elysium work well enough to keep the book ticking over and expand her character until the Cybermen arrive.

The treatment of the Cybermen is interesting. They are, for the start, the Cybermen of the sixties — no "Excellent"s, no hand-clenching, not a sign that David Banks has written the Cybermen to match his own characterisation. These Cybermen are what they are supposed to be — adapted survivors from *The Invasion*. This emphasis on continuity would, under other circumstances, be irritating, but in this case it works, simply because the Cyber-history presented in Who Dares' book (and used as a basis here) is about the only decent piece of Who pseudo-history ever published — because David Banks spent a year or two discussing his ideas with fans around the country (and adapting them as a result), whereas everyone else simply published their own ideas and prejudices unchecked and without explanation.

The Cyber-dialogue is nevertheless interesting, in that a good half of it is quoted directly from *Tomb, The Wheel in Space,* and *The Tenth Planet* ("We will survive...", etc). In some ways this is sensible — under similar circumstances, a logical machine would use the same words. But for the fan, the effect is distracting, as one tends to pay more attention to identifying the quote than reading the book. The treatment of other aspects of Cyber-continuity is good — in particular the use of the gold weakness, which deals nicely with an addition to Cyber-lore which has often irritated fans of their early stories.

The Cybermen's plan is very straightforward, in the style of adventures such as *The Moonbase* and *The Wheel in Space*. They intend to capture an isolated outpost which housing some important technological device, and use it to devastate the globe so that they can take over. In the meantime, they are kidnapping humans from the 'torus antarctica' and converting them to boost their numbers. The description of the conversion process, and in particular that involved in the 'mobility experiment' (where a nice parallel with *Tomb* is achieved) is effectively chilling, coming close to the point where it would be nauseating. Definitely not for those with a weak stomach. Here, in fact, as elsewhere, the book is perhaps overwritten — certainly, there are certain passages of description seen though Ruby's eyes which could easily have removed, and which would have tightened the pace of the book no end.

In addition to the above quote, the New Adventures influence shows in other ways. As in *Warhead* and co, persistent references are made to the 'vineyards of Kent' and the levels of air pollution, the effects of the pollution inflicted upon Earth in the late twentieth century. This is irritating. By 2030 such radical changes are possible, by 2050 they're very likely unless something's done fairly soon, but by 2006? Without some major disaster, such as the magnetic reversal the FLIPback team are striving to prevent, the effects of such changes would still be some time away. The New Adventures do the cause of environmentalism no good through this tedious exaggeration. This is particularly unfortunate as the depiction of other aspects of 2006 — the Freedom foundation security firm, the hand-held mouses, are entirely credible. (I do however have a minor quibble with David Banks' use of the term true south to refer to the magnetic pole. As far as I understand, true south lies on the earth's axis of reputation, and is entirely unconnected with the magnetic pole).

An acceptable number of injokes are present — from her birth-place, I presume Ruby to be based on David Banks' daughter, while the crew of Snowcap base are named after the actors who played the first Cybermen. These also help to make *Iceberg* an enjoyable read, which captures something of the style of the sixties' monster nightmares. However — I read *Iceberg* in dribs and drabs, as was convenient. It didn't inspire me to find the time to finish it in one session. That, automatically, must be marked against it as a failure. It didn't grip. It is an enjoyable, and rather atypical, New Adventure, but far from the best of the range. Overall, it's a little better than average. (7)

Anthony Brown

SAPPHIRE AND STEEL ADVENTURE SIX

ITC 8125

AT LAST ITC has released the final adventure from the ATV series Sapphire & Steel. After defeating threats to Earth from all manner of nasties our two temporal investigators find themselves in the stickiest of situations after being summoned to tackle what they think is a routine case of temporal distortion.

They find themselves in a service station where time is at a standstill at 8.54 at night. Silver, a technician, has arrived before the two investigators, which is against normal procedure and sets the trio to thinking that everything is not quite as it should be. The only other two inhabitants of the station are a nameless couple from 1948 who say they arrived just as they were about to buy petrol from an old man who sells it from his shed. As if on cue images of an old man start to appear to the investigators.

It does not take long before more sinister and unexplained events turn the investigators from the hunters into the hunted. As their suspicions are aroused they search desperately for clues as to what is going on and Sapphire, Silver and Steel concentrate their investigations on the mysterious couple who appear to have more than just an illicit affair to hide.

Johanna Kirby and Edward de Souza are magnificent as the couple, with de Souza exhibiting a degree of arrogance and upper class reserve that makes him instantly disliked by the audience. Special mention must go to Johanna Kirby whose appearance and demeanour as the woman makes the character both frightened and yet menacing. She seems both scared of the situation in which she finds herself yet too self assured to stand up to the investigators the way she does.

David Collins is magnificent as ever as the charming Silver and he is always on hand to lend assistance when Steel's strong arm tactics and Sapphire's manipulation of time fail to do the job.

P.J. Hammond cannot be faulted for this first rate story to finish off a first rate series. Adventure Six is both tense and haunting and acts as a great finale to one of the most entertaining and imaginative productions ever seen on the small screen. (9)

Anthony McKay

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Silver CHAMPIONS

WHETHER OR NOT you believe Dennis Spooner's hint that The Champions was only commissioned because the idea was so daft that you couldn't pan it as a rip-off of The Saint, you have to admit that it was a rather unusual show, even by sixties' standards. Through 30 episodes, our three intrepid heroes travelled the world, or at least the back- projection screen, handling cases as diverse as drug runners, Fourth Reich activists, the living dead... Somehow, although this was the first, and — until The Flash — last half-decent attempt at a superhero show not just aimed at kids, The Champions has faded very much into obscurity over the last couple of decades. However, as 1993 is the show's 25th anniversary and the episodes are being released on video at an ever-increasing rate (albeit in a very peculiar order), the time seems right to take a brief look back at this wildly variable, yet always entertaining series.

The Champions was created by former Doctor Who story editor Dennis Spooner, in collaboration with director Cyril Frankel, a former Hammer crewman and subsequent longtime ITC stalwart. At this time, late 67 to early 68, ITC's Monty Berman had had little success with either The Baron or Man In A Suitcase, both of which were frequently criticised for being too similar to The Saint, both in style and in the plots of certain episodes. Spooner's proposal, therefore, was well received. As one might expect, due to the success of The Saint in the US, The Champions was to be made with the American market in mind. To this end, the episodes were shot in colour on 35mm film stock, although their original ITV transmission was monochrome. The biggest problem of aiming for the US market, however, was the budget, which had to be spread carefully. Therefore, once an expensive submarine set had been built, we saw it in three different episodes, the costs also being offset by trimming the budgets of other episodes. The end result of this was that, although the series had a very high budget overall, several episodes look so cheap that they have to be seen to be believed! A case in point is *Operation Deep Freeze*, which has plenty of antarctic stock footage, along with probably the least convincing snow field studio set in TV history.

Together, Frankel and Spooner came up with most of the scripting and directorial tricks that would remain constant through the series' run, particularly with regard to the uses of the trio's powers. Rather than use speeded-up film, most of the 'strength' tricks were achieved by using a stuntman (usually Frank Maher), either in a jerk-harness or bounced off a trampette, for scenes when one of the central trio belted someone. The use of other powers, such as memory recall or super-hearing, was invariably indicated by a memorable sound effect consisting of a bass rumbling overlaid with a two-tone oscillating note. Often, if it was a hearing-based effect, the background sound would be faded out so that only the sound effect and the voice (or whatever) being listened to were audible to the audience.

In the instances when the back projection gets overused (*Reply Box No 666*), or there's no money for a new story (*The Interrogation*), the show does however manage to get by on the charm of its three stars. Officially, the three were supposed to be equals, with each having 'their' episodes. In reality, however, this doesn't really hold up to close examination.

Alexandra Bastedo tends to do well, performance-wise, as Sharron MacReady, a biologist recruited by Nemesis, though as usual for the women in this type of show, the writers did tend to leave her out of the action a lot. When she gets the chance, though, most notably in *Twelve Hours* and *Autokill*, she does deliver the goods, and to a certain extent seems to have the most common sense of the three. A frequent ITC guest star, many people today will probably only remember her as the co-host of Miss World shows — and even that is fading into memory...

Stuart Damon was usually pushed as the star, and gets most of the heroics to do during the 30 shows, since they reasoned that to succeed in America, they'd have to have an American star. His character, ex-USAF pilot Craig Stirling, is therefore mostly interchangeable with Richard Bradford's McGill from Man In A Suitcase, or indeed any other 'clean-cut American hero', but in several episodes, Damon manages to do something more interesting with him. Usually this means injecting a little humour or silliness, as in his 'salesman' disguise in *The Gilded Cage*, but sometimes he manages to show us something of what it must be to have these super-powers, which is quite unusual for such a series. His finest moment, though, comes in *The Interrogation*, in which the viewer is certainly gripped, proving that there are imported American 'stars' who can act.

Personally though, I reckon William Gaunt comes off the best, as cryptographer Richard Barrett. The writers frequently seemed to have wanted to cast him as rather fresh and naive — a bit like DS9's Dr Bashir — but Gaunt is too good an actor (as is Sid, for that matter) to let this lie, and he usually seems the most believable of the three, in his reactions to the villains, and to his own powers. Indeed, he virtually carries *The Gilded Cage* on his own, as it is an otherwise boring episode. He also usually gets all the funniest lines...

DOCTOR WHO

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The Champions

	Writer	Director	Guest stars include...
The Beginning	Dennis Spooner	Cyril Frankel	Felix Aylmer, Burt Kwouk, Joseph Furst
(A second version of this episode exists, including framing scenes so that THE CHAMPIONS' origins can be shown in flashback at any point during a repeat run...)			
The Invisible Man	Donald James	Cyril Frankel	Peter Wyngarde, Aubrey Morris
Reply Box No.666	Philip Broadley	Cyril Frankel	Anton Rodgers, Brian Worth
The Experiment	Tony Williamson	Cyril Frankel	David Bauer, Nicholas Courtney, Allan Cuthbertson
Happening	Brian Clemens	Cyril Frankel	Michael Gough, Grant Taylor
Operation Deep Freeze	Gerard Kelsey	Paul Dickson	Patrick Wymark, Robert Urquhart, Walter Gotell
The Survivors	Donald James	Cyril Frankel	Bernard Kay, Donald Houston, Stephen Yardley
To Trap a Rat	Ralph Smart	Sam Wanamaker	Kate O'Mara, Michael Standing, John Lee
The Iron Man	Philip Broadley	John Moxey	George Murcell, Patrick Magee, Steven Berkoff
The Ghost Plane	Donald James	John Gilling	Andrew Keir, Dennis Chinnery, Paul Grist
The Dark Island	Tony Williamson	Cyril Frankel	Vladek Sheybal
The Fanatics	Terry Nation	John Gilling	Gerald Harper, Julian Glover, Donald Pickering
Twelve Hours	Donald James	Paul Dickson	Mike Pratt, Rio Fanning
The Search	Dennis Spooner	Leslie Norman	John Woodvine, Reginald Marsh, Joseph Furst
The Gilded Page	Philip Broadley	Cyril Frankel	Jennie Linden, Clinton Greyn, Tony Caunter
Shadow of the Panther	Tony Williamson	Freddie Francis	Donald Sutherland, Zia Moyheddin
The Interrogation	Dennis Spooner	Cyril Frankel	Colin Blakely
The Mission	Donald James	Robert Asher	Dermot Kelly, Anthony Bate, Harry Towb
The Silent Enemy	Donald James	Robert Asher	Warren Stanhope, Marne Maitland, Rio Fanning
The Body Snatchers	Terry Nation	Paul Dickson	Bernard Lee, Philip Locke
Get Me Out of Here	Ralph Smart	Cyril Frankel	Philip Madoc, Frances Cuka, Eric Pohlmann
The Night People	Donald James	Robert Asher	Terence Alexander, Adrienne Corri, Frank Thornton
Project Zero	Tony Williamson	Don Sharp	Rupert Davies, Peter Copley, Jill Curzon
Desert Journey	Ian Stuart Black	Paul Dickson	Roger Delgado, Jeremy Brett
Full Circle	Donald James	John Giling	Patrick Allen, Martin Benson, Gabrielle Drake
The Nutcracker	Philip Broadley	Roy Ward Baker	William Squire, David Langton
The Final Countdown	Gerald Kelsey	John Gilling	Alan McNaughtan, Hannah Gordon, Norman Jones
The Gunrunners	Dennis Spooner	Robert Asher	William Franklyn, David Lodge, Nicholas Chagrin
Autokill	Brian Clemens	Roy Ward Baker	Eric Pohlmann, Paul Eddington, Harold Innocent

With the format decided, a group of writers and directors was assembled. Many of them were ITC veterans who had worked on most of the detective/adventure shows that the company produced. However, a number of the writers had experience in the more — bizarre, shall we say — series that were produced in the sixties. Probably the most notable, or important at any rate, among them was a certain Terry Nation, who had already created the Daleks, and at the time just beginning duty as script editor for the last season of THE AVENGERS. Nation's SF writing is typically formulaic (Harlan Ellison once said that Gene Roddenberry only had two plots, but this also applies to Nation's SF work, when one considers his frequent 'exterminate radioactive Nazis' plotlines) but as a contemporary adventure writer, he can certainly deliver the goods. His episode, *The Fanatics*, is not the best in the series, but it does make an interesting change from his WHO and BLAKE stories, and previews the heights he would reach on THE AVENGERS. (His episode *Legacy of Death*, despite the pretentious title, is possibly the most entertaining in that series' history.)

Another AVENGERS name making the crossover was Brian Clemens, who turned in both *Happening*, which is a fairly plain, if well-scripted episode, as well as the final episode. In fact, *Autokill* is another excellent example of the way the series could handle the mixture of intriguing thrills that was required of it, as well as finally giving Sharron a chance to do her stuff. As for the stunt, er, 'doubles', and I use the word in its loosest possible sense, they make the bewigged fighters in STAR TREK look convincing.

The best CHAMPIONS scribe, however, could only be Tony Williamson — another former AVENGERS script editor, and co-creator of ADAM ADAMANT. Two of Williamson's three episodes supply some of the best-remembered images from the show, including the classic teaser to *The Experiment*, in which the fake superhero ends up mesmerised by a spinning top after performing a raid that would make Schwarzenegger proud. Likewise, his second episode, *Shadow Of The Panther*, is full of marvellous imagery; I mean, who can forget Craig and Richard single-handedly defending the battered hotel against all those zombies… (Before you ask, no I didn't watch this again as part of the research for *White Darkness*!)

On the directorial front Frankel himself directed a grand total of nine of the thirty episodes. More interesting are the pedigrees of several other directors. Freddie Francis, James Gilling, and Roy Ward Baker were all experienced Hammer directors familiar with turning low-budget requirements into thrills and spills, so it is perhaps no surprise that their episodes are the most successful at suspending the viewers' disbelief and getting on with the entertainment. One-off directors included the noted actor/director Sam Wanamaker, and Don Sharp, who had just completed *The Face Of Fu Manchu* with Christopher Lee. The memorable theme was composed by Tony Hatch, nowadays notorious for CROSSROADS and NEIGHBOURS, while assistant Art Director John Graysmark later became Production Designer on blockbusters such as *Robin Hood - Prince Of Thieves*.

©ITC

And so to the show itself. In American style, each episode opened with a teaser, or pre-credit sequence. This invariably began with the camera focusing in on the current location as displayed on the world map in Nemesis boss Tremayne's office, and the first appearance of this week's 'star' was accompanied by a frequently over-pretentious voice-over by David Bauer (who appears in *The Experiment*) giving a brief bit of background data. The title sequence, overlaid with Hatch's theme, one of the best from the sixties, climaxed with a memorable shot of the trio standing before the fountain at Lac Lemain. To frame the commercial break a special sequence was shot in which at the end of an act, viewers would see the trio turn away from the camera to look at the fountain, while when returning from the break the trio would turn back to the camera again. This short sequence was generally dropped from actual transmissions and replaced by a simple caption slide, particularly in the repeats of later years.

THE CHAMPIONS were a multinational team working for an organisation called Nemesis based in Geneva, which meant that naturally they would handle cases in all corners of the world — Austria, the Caribbean, Antarctica, Burma... and all shot in the Home Counties! As with the majority of ITC series (especially Berman's) most location shooting was done in the countryside around Elstree, with the interiors shot at the Associated British stages there. Several London-based episodes had footage filmed there, but this was mainly split into two varieties: footage of expensive houses and mansions, and footage of docklands and warehouses. A few standard shots of the sights were also taken. This filming generally consisted of the leads, together or singly, wandering the streets, looking concerned, mysterious or whatever, the shots then being edited into any episodes requiring it. These shots were all filmed together over a couple of days at the start of the shooting block. The 'fine houses' locations were filmed mainly around Park Crescent and the Portland Place/Devonshire Street area. Later a unit shot new footage around the city and in some of the surrounding towns, but using stand-ins (generally blatantly obvious) to save time and money. More filming was done around the India Docks area as well as the Isle of Dogs and Deptford locales. Occasionally special filming was done, when money allowed, such as at Knebworth House for *The Night People* (set in Cornwall!), for example.

When a more exotic location was required, either a set was constructed on one of the medium-sized stages, or a back-projection of a travelogue (or even still photographs!) would be used. No foreign filming was done for THE CHAMPIONS, though odd bits of foreign-shot stock footage from THE SAINT were known to appear, along with clips of other travelogues (*The Interrogation* contains such scenes, for example, with a number of flashback clips to *The Beginning*). The keen viewer may also recognise sets from other shows, including (if memory serves correctly) sections of Portmeirion-style buildings left on stage from THE PRISONER which turn up in *Reply Box No 666*.

On the casting side, many famous faces from British films and TV — mostly telefantasy veterans — appeared throughout the series' run. These even included the likes of Donald Sutherland, adding a touch of star-spotting to the show, and belaying the show's budget. You can also watch out for the likes of Roger Delgado, Julian Glover, Andrew Keir, Gerald Harper, Nick Courtney, Kate O'Mara...

Of course, such a comic-strip type of series required inventive action sequences and effects from time to time. The stunts are usually excellent, and the show is the only one where the villains are literally lifted off their feet by a punch from our heroes. Visual effects of other type were more rarely used, though the model sequences involving the plane crash in *The Beginning* are excellent even by today's standards – which probably explains where most of the budget went… For the most part, each episode ended with a bout of fisticuffs, and the villains often being hoist by their own petards, as in *Operation Deep-Freeze, The Ghost Plane, The Gunrunners* and several others. Again, there are exceptions, with *The Gilded Cage* immediately springing to mind as ending with Craig simply walking in and arresting the bad guys!

Above: The Terrific Three — Craig (Stuart Damon), Richard (William Gaunt) and Sharron (Alexandra Bastedo) ©ITC

Marketing of the show was done in much the same way as the majority of programmes at the time. A trailer was made for the ITV regions, which consists of clips from *The Beginning*, and is similar, though not identical, to the one included on ITC videos these days — there is no scene of the trio in the Chinese lab, the clip of Richard and Craig discussing what has happened to them is longer, and there is a longer clip of Craig grabbing a gun and shooting some Chinese soldiers toward the end. All this was presented with a voice-over explaining what was happening, while a caption slide with the episode's title was faded in over a shot of the trio's journey through the ancient citadel. Oddly, although the trailer was on colour film, it was introduced by a narrator shot on monochrome video announcing the new series in September.

A licence was granted to Century 21, who printed a three page episodic comic strip (black and white only) in *Joe 90: Top Secret*. A slim novelisation was produced by John Garforth, and what would now be called trading cards were also produced. Naturally, the series was not immune from mickey-taking, with Mad Magazine doing a brief spoof, and children's comic publishers IPC turning out *The Chumpions*.

The series was relatively well received in Britain, where it debuted on Saturday 13th of September 1967 in the ATV region, but only ten episodes were shown in the states on the ABC network, before they axed it, feeling that the superhero fad initiated by BATMAN was dying out. Without the US profits that were expected, the show was quietly cancelled. Due to the vagaries of the ITV regions, it was generally shown at different times, and the lack of centralisation meant it never gained the audience or reputation of its more famous brethren like THE AVENGERS and THE SAINT. This is rather strange since, despite its variable scripts and production values, THE CHAMPIONS, like so many other ITC series, is very watchable thanks to the charm of its three stars, who work well either together or individually. Each offers something different, and there is also something of a mystery for the first-time viewer, over which of the trio will be this week's star. Together, the trio, along with the undoubted enthusiasm on the part of the crew, carry the show beyond its origins and provide a good fifty minutes' worth of entertainment, no matter what. When it comes right down to it, what more can you ask for from a tongue-in-cheek escapist adventure series? Recently, with telefantasy overall making something of a comeback (except on BBC1…), the series is seeing a new lease of life on video, and has even had a convention recently, along with screenings at the NFT — at which William Gaunt seemed bemused that anybody actually remembered the show! However, there are still a few of us who fondly remember the show, and I'm fairly certain that in this anniversary year, those who newly discover the series will be just as entertained by its stars and its comic-strip verve. Why not try it and see?

David McIntee